EERIE #129

A WARREN MAGAZINE

FEB. 1982

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WPS 37926

HAGGARTH SEARCHES FOR TREASURE...

...IN A FORGOTTEN WORLD...

...OF DEADLY AMAZONS!

ALSO FEATURING:
THE DEAD-THING!
MERCENARY!
MS. LIBERTY!

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THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

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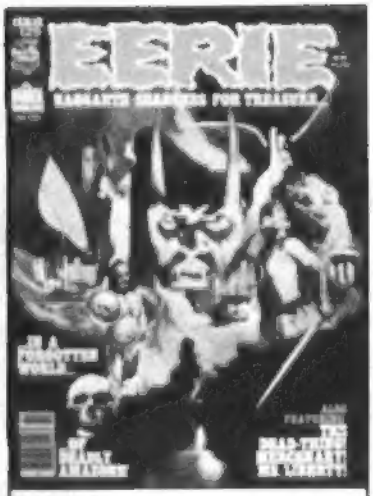

EERIE

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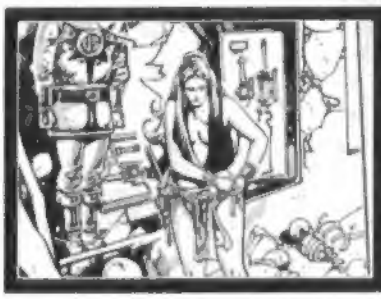
ODE TO A DEAD THING 5

Marvin wanted to end it all! He pitched himself into the river with a rock to weigh him down...but once again, Marvin was not a success! He emerged from the river, but he was no longer Marvin! He was no longer even human! Corrosive chemicals had transformed the meek-ling into a muck-encrusted golem with the strength of ten!



MS. LIBERTY 19

In the shattered ruins of Post-Apocalypse America, one woman has not forgotten the life and the love she had before! She seeks her husband, hoping that they can rebuild at least a shadow of their former lives! But the world is swarming with grotesque, radiation-crazed cannibals, and they know nothing of the forgotten word 'love!'

MERCENARY 29

He was a Soldier of Fortune who would fight for any man or nation who could meet his fee! He was totally without scruple or conscience, equally at home killing or loving! Such a man is deadly, but such a man can also find himself up the creek if, as in this small but dangerous Nation, everyone else shares his depraved and duplicitous code!

SPACEWRECKED 39

He awoke from his sleep across the Millenia to find the Universe an even more dangerous place than it had been in his time, and man a much-changed being! Deadly alien spores had grown to meteorite proportions and were preying on the panicked populace while a chosen few fled in fragile spaceships...leaving the rest to die!

HAGGARTH 53

While Haggarth was otherwise engaged, the tall, powerfully built Amazon slipped down off her lizard mount and crept up slowly behind the warrior, fully intending to kill him! But Haggarth was not an easy man to overcome...especially twice! This formidable she-warrior with the pet bird of prey would be taught a serious lesson!

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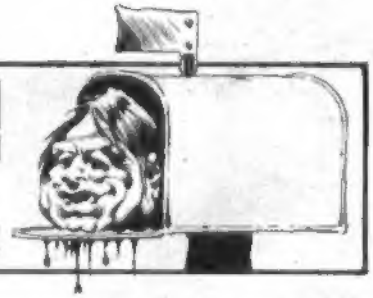
DEAR COUSIN EERIE



The concluding chapter of **"Haggarth"** in **EERIE #127** contained one major shock and another major disappointment.

The shock occurred when **Haggarth** killed Borin. I can't remember ever being so surprised at something in a comic book. Looking back, I realized that it was not a cheat. It was logical, though savage, for **Haggarth** to kill his friend under such circumstances. It made me realize that, for a genre that depends on shocks and twists of plot, comic books are usually pretty predictable fare. This was one major exception.

I was disappointed, however, that the death of the villainous King Thall was so abrupt and so **hidden!** I don't mean to appear ghoulish, but it might have been nice to **see** that little squirt get crushed under the falling pillars. Is it possible that he might return? God forbid.

Victor de la Fuente takes alot of hard criticism from your readers, but I have never seen their point. I think that he is one of the greatest comic illustrators working today. **EERIE** will be a lonely reading experience without him.

CHUCK NASHUA
Cleveland, Ohio

It was **absurd! E.R. Cruz's** stilted and boring renderings placed side by side with the likes of **Howard Chaykin, Victor de la Fuente,** and **Rudy Nebres.** This was the situation in **EERIE #127,** a very fine issue all in all, but damaged critically by the moronic "Merlin and the Sorcerer."

The climax of the story, a potentially exciting chase through the caverns as the beasts from the pit try to overtake Houdini and Merlin, fell flat. **Cruz's** work is not dynamic enough to involve us.

I am no fan of **Rudy Nebres.** His work is so thick and his layouts so confusing that after trying to decipher one of his jungle stories you feel like you've been lost in the jungle for days! But at least it can be said of **Nebres** that he is a stylist.

This is what **Warren** magazines have always meant to me, and it is the principal reason I buy them regularly: the **Warren** editors let talented artists go with their imaginations, without binding rules and restrictive formats.

Someone ought to light a fire under **E.R. Cruz** so that he'll let loose. He has shown in the "Zud Kamish" series that he has a vivid imagination. He only uses it selectively, it seems.

HANK TURNBULL
Cincinnati, Ohio

It was an inspired idea to team up Merlin the magician with the great Houdini. But inspiration must have dried up on **Budd Lewis** in writing the tale, for "Merlin and the Sorcerer" was a waste of what could have been a stirring tale.

Though Merlin and Houdini both exploited their talents at some point in the story, and their use of their gifts complemented one another cleverly, the story only led down an old and familiar path: demons hidden deep in the earth. Man, it must be getting crowded down there, because the sci-fi genre has filled the earth's core with more lost cities and extinct beasts and creepy-crawlies from another dimension than the whole planet can hold!

E.R. Cruz's artwork was appropriately murky and nicely atmospheric, but his demons were laughable and he still hasn't got the knack of making each of his characters individualized. I look forward to better work from both **Cruz** and **Lewis.**

J.B.
Monterey, Calif.

EERIE #127 was one of the best issues ever! No kidding, **Warren Publishing** is on a hot streak!

"King of the Jungle" was another dynamic and dynamite **Rudy Nebres** work. That man knows how to make his action come **alive!** "Reuben Youngblood" managed to wrest a teeny-tiny surprise ending out of a vampire story, and that's hard to do! **Budd Lewis** should be applauded, and **Howard Chaykin** should be sainted for his magnificent artwork.

"Merlin and the Sorcerer" was the weak link in the issue and is hardly worth discussing.

"Haggarth" closed the issue with a literal **bang** as the whole damned city seemed to tumble down and crown King Thall for **good! Victor de la Fuente's** work can be tedious at times, admittedly, but it can also soar aloft and excite the living heck out of me!

BILLY BROOKS
Chatanooga, Tenn.

DEAR COUSIN EERIE,
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The values demonstrated in "King of the Jungle" were interesting indeed. In revenge for killing and defiling an elephant, and for poaching other game as well, Justin King, the hero, went out and killed a half a dozen men or so, and had a great time doing it!

I applaud authors **Will Richardson** and **Rich Margopoulos** for their concern about the sorry state of wildlife in Africa and all over the world. There is a tremendous problem with wholesale slaughter for profit and, though airing the problem in a comic may not produce a solution, it does no harm to call the readers' attention to it.

Serious as the problem is, though, I cannot admire a man who murders men for their ecological crimes. Ultimately human life is of utmost value.

The story reminded me of the movie "Silent Running" in which Bruce Dern murdered two of his best friends for their decision to scrap a grove of trees they were tending on a space satellite. Twisted values...the culture is lousy with them.

WILLIAM GALEY
Stowe, Vermont

What a miserable excuse for a comic **EERIE #127** was! "King of the Jungle" was so routine and familiar I felt as if I'd read it a thousand times before. It was a shock that it required two writers to finish it **(Rich Margopoulos** and **Will Richardson).** At the same time, it seems that **Rudy Nebres** is beginning to repeat himself over and over again. All of his stories look the same!

"Reuben Youngblood," though handsomely illustrated by **Howard Chaykin,** was another routine tale with a predictable twist ending. "Merlin and the Sorcerer" was another blown opportunity by **Budd Lewis** and **E.R. Cruz** to update Merlin. They should leave the old fellow in the middle Ages where he belongs, and where they belong as well!

Haggarth's adventures among Borin's rebels came to a grinding halt, wouldn't you say? A few cursory words from a wise sage hardly sums up a series that seemed to run forever!

D.B.
Fisk, Missouri

I can't remember the last time that we saw the excellent artwork of **Howard Chaykin** in the pages of a **Warren** magazine. Thus, it was a pleasant surprise to see "Reuben Youngblood in **EERIE #127.** Though the story itself by **Budd Lewis** was pretty tired, the artwork was pefect! **Chaykin** effortlessly evoked the era of the Roaring 20's. The clothes, the cars, and the architecture were all letter-perfect. I look forward to more from **Chaykin** in future issues of the one and only **EERIE!**

GALEN PETERS
Fort Worth, Texas

prologue
MARVIN KANFER WAS A FAILURE! HIS LIFE WAS AN INIMITABLE SHAMBLES! HOPELESSLY DESPONDENT, UTTERLY LONELY, HE CLUMSILY AFFIXED A ROCK TO A ROPE AND TIED IT TIGHT ABOUT HIS NECK!
HE THEN THREW HIMSELF INTO A RIVER...TO END HIS MISERY, ONCE AND FOR ALL ETERNITY!
BUT EVEN IN DEATH, MARVIN WAS AN ABJECT FAILURE! HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL WASTES, DUMPED INTO THE WATERS FAR UPSTREAM, REACTED STRANGELY WITH THE MYSTICALLY CHURNING CURRENTS...!
AND MARVIN WAS TRANSFORMED ...INTO A HIDEOUS, MUCK-ENCRUSTED DEAD THING!
EVERYONE FEARED AND LOATHED MARVIN IN HIS PRESENT MONSTROUS INCARNATION! EVERYONE, THAT IS, SAVE FOR ONE, NAMELESS LITTLE GIRL! SHE ACCEPTED HIM, WITH CHILDLIKE INNOCENCE! SHE TREATED MARVIN...AS A FRIEND!
B-BAM! BAM! DAMM!
WITH TEARS BURNING IN HIS MELTED EYES...AND PAIN RIPPING THROUGH HIS BROKEN HEART, MARVIN GENTLY CRADLED HIS LITTLE FRIEND, AS HE CARRIED HER SILENT BODY TO THE SAME MYSTICALLY POLLUTED WATERS THAT HAD BEQUEATHED NEW LIFE UNTO HIM!
BUT THE PRICE OF THAT FRIENDSHIP WAS HIGH! FAR TOO HIGH! FOR, ONE NIGHT, AS OUTRAGED VILLAGERS RELENTLESSLY TRACKED THE MONSTER THAT HAD ONCE BEEN MARVIN KANFER ...THE CHILD INNOCENTLY WANDERED INTO THE PATH OF THEIR RIGHTEOUSLY DEVASTATING BULLETS!
BULLETS THAT HAD BEEN MEANT FOR A MONSTER ...NOT FOR A LITTLE GIRL!

JUST AS THE ENCHANTED WATERS HAD, FOR SUICIDAL MARVIN...THEY BESTOWED NEW LIFE TO THE FRAIL, BULLET-RIDDEN BODY OF THE LITTLE GIRL!
AND...TO THIS DAY, IT IS SAID THAT THE LUMBERING MAN-BEAST AND THE GENTLE CHILD-THING GAMBOL TOGETHER HAPPILY IN A MURKY SOUTHEASTERN SWAMP, FAR FROM THE TORMENTING TROUBLES...FAR FROM THE PRYING EYES OF A WORLD THAT REFUSED TO ACCEPT THEM AS THEY WERE!
YET, EVER SO INFREQUENTLY, THAT TROUBLED WORLD INTRUDES INTO THEIR PEACEFUL, SWAMPY WONDERLAND!
C'MON, BOBBY-JEAN! YOU'VE GOTTA DO IT! THROW IT IN BEFORE SOMEBODY SEES US!
I... I CAN'T, BILLY! WHAT... WHAT WE DID... WAS WRONG! YOU ...YOU SAID YOU'D MARRY ME! YOU GAVE ME ...YOUR WORD!
YOU KNOW I CAN'T MARRY YOU RIGHT NOW, BOBBY-JEAN! I STILL GOTTA TAKE CARE OF MY POOR OLD GRANDMOTHER!
NOW, PLEASE...THROW IT IN!
UNDER THE BOY'S RELENTLESS PRODDING, THE ANGUISHED GIRL SLOWLY, TENDERLY, DROPS THE SACK...INTO THE BUBBLING WATERS!
AND YET, AS IT BOBS IN THE CHURNING CURRENT, THE LITTLE BUNDLE COMES GENTLY UNDONE...
...AND A TINY BLOOD-SLICKED ARM APPEARS...THE PATHETIC, LIFELESS LIMB OF A NEWBORN HUMAN CHILD!
UGHNNN! BAD PEOPLE! THEY KILL... BABY!

ODE TO A
DEAD·THING!
THE TROUBLED LOVERS TURN AND SHUFFLE AWAY, EACH LOST IN THEIR OWN BROODING THOUGHTS...OBLIVIOUS TO THE EYES THAT WATCH THEM FROM THICK WOODLAND SHADOWS!
...ALL THE WHILE, THE SACK WITH THE SILENT, STILLBORN INFANT BUBBLES AS IT QUICKLY SINKS INTO THE CHURNING, MAN-POISONED WATERS!
WE...WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG! THE BABY WAS BORN DEAD...YOU KNOW THAT! WE HAD TO THROW IT IN THE RIVER...SO PEOPLE WOULDN'T FIND OUT!
IF THEY DID...YOUR DADDY WOULD BEAT THE LIFE RIGHT OUTTA BOTH OF US!

THE YOUTH'S BOISTEROUS WORDS DO LITTLE TO CONSOLE THE GIRL'S RACKING SOBS! SHE CARES FOR HIM...LOVES HIM WITH HER BODY AND SOUL! SHE SO EAGERLY LOOKED FORWARD TO MARRIAGE, HAPPINESS, A FAMILY!
AT LEAST SHE HAS SPARED HER PARENTS THE DISGRACE OF AN UNWED DAUGHTER, SHE KNOWS! BUT, SOMEHOW...THAT'S NOT NEARLY ENOUGH WHEN SHE COULD HAVE HAD SO MUCH MORE!
INSTEAD, SHE'S FOUND HER GOLDEN DREAMS FLOUNDERING ON THE COLD, CRUEL SHOALS OF REALITY!
PLEASE DON'T CRY, BOBBY-JEAN! YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU! JUST...JUST GIVE ME A YEAR! TWO YEARS! THEN WE'LL GET MARRIED! YOU'LL SEE!
WIPE YOUR EYES BEFORE YOU GO IN, BOBBY-JEAN! AND FOR GOD'S SAKE...STOP WHIMPERING!
I...I'M TRYING, BILLY! HONEST!
GOOD AFTERNOON, MRS. BLAKE!
WHY, HELLO, BILLY! WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND HERE IN A WHILE!
WHERE HAVE YOU TWO BEEN ALL DAY? I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK THAT YOU'D GONE OFF AND ELOPED OR SOMETHING!
OH... WE'VE BEEN UP AT MY GRANDMOTHER'S PLACE! SHE... SHE'S BEEN AWFUL SICK, YOU KNOW!
NO...I DIDN'T KNOW, BILLY! BUT THEN... I STILL HAVEN'T HAD THE CHANCE TO MEET YOUR GRANDMOTHER SINCE YOU MOVED TO THESE PARTS!
IF THERE'S ANYTHING SHE NEEDS OR ANYTHING WE CAN DO FOR HER...YOU JUST LET US KNOW, BILLY!
THAT'S AWFULLY NICE OF YOU, MRS. BLAKE! I'M SURE GRANNY WILL BE VERY GRATEFUL!

THE BOY WANDERS SMUGLY INTO THE NIGHT, UNAWARE OF THE MONSTROUS FORMS WHICH SIT PATIENTLY BY THE OLD WOODEN BRIDGE AT THE EDGE OF THE FESTERING SWAMP...WAITING!
WAITING FOR THE UNKNOWN CHEMICAL REACTION TO AGAIN WORK ITS MAGIC ON AN UNWANTED STILLBORN CHILD!
AND YET...THEIR PATIENCE IS REWARDED ONLY WITH...SILENCE! AND MARVIN BEGINS TO REALIZE THAT PERHAPS THE LIFEGIVING WATERS, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...HAVE LOST THEIR ABILITY TO GIVE BIRTH!
WITH BARELY A BACKWARD GLANCE, THE THING ONCE CALLED MARVIN GUIDES THE GIRL INTO THE DANK SAFETY OF THE NIGHT ENSHADOWED FOREST!
PERHAPS, OVER THE YEARS, THE RIVER HAS CLEANSED ITSELF OF THE LIFEGIVING CHEMICAL POLLUTANTS!
SHE NEEDS NO WORDS TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE TINY PLAYMATE FOR WHICH SHE HAD FERVENTLY HOPED, WILL NOT BE JOINING THEM AFTER ALL!
THEN AGAIN...
...PERHAPS IT HAS NOT!

THOUGH HER PARENTS FAIL TO SEE IT, THE GIRL IS SICK FROM THE REALIZATION THAT BILLY'S LOVE IS A LIE...AND THAT THE LIFE THAT HAD BEEN INSIDE HER WOULD NEVER KNOW HER LOVE!
BOBBY-JEAN! YOU'VE HARDLY TOUCHED YOUR DINNER, HONEY! SOMETHING THE MATTER?
Y-YES! I...I'M NOT FEELING WELL! I... I-! LEAVE ME ALONE... DAMN YOU! LEAVE ME ALONE!
WHAT THE HELL'S THE MATTER WITH HER?
IN HER ROOM, SHE BATHES HER PILLOW WITH STREAMS OF SWEET-SALTY TEARS! THE MEMORIES CRASH LIKE TORRENTS UPON HER AS SHE THINKS BACK... BACK TO THAT ILL-FATED DAY IN THE BARN WHEN BILLY CONVINCED HER OF HIS SEEMINGLY ETERNAL LOVE!
IT WAS ONLY A MONTH OR TWO LATER WHEN SHE FELT THE FIRST MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF A NEW LIFE SWELLING GLORIOUSLY WITHIN HER CHILD-LIKE BODY!
AT FIRST THE LAD SEEMED GENUINELY PLEASED AT THE PROSPECT OF BECOMING A FATHER! AND YET, AS THE WEEKS WORE ON, DOUBTS SOON SURFACED IN BOBBY-JEAN'S MIND!
I...I'M HAVING YOUR CHILD, BILLY! WE...WE'RE GOING TO BE A FAMILY! IT'S WHAT I'VE WANTED MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD!
AND BILLY, WITH A LOT OF SLICK TALK AND FANCY WORDS, TRIED TO FORCE HER TO GET RID OF THE BUDDING LIFE GROWING WITHIN HER WOMB!
MY GRANNY USED TO BE A MID-WIFE! SHE'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BABY FOR US...BUT WE GOTTA PAY HER WELL!
BILLY! IT'S OUR BABY YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
HE TRIED AGAIN IN THE FLEETING MONTHS WHICH FOLLOWED...BUT THE GIRL WAS ADAMANT...SHE WAS GOING TO HAVE HIS BABY WHETHER BILLY WANTED IT OR NOT!
LUCKILY, SHE CARRIED THE CHILD WELL! EVEN TOWARDS THE END, NO ONE COULD TELL SHE WAS PREGNANT BENEATH THE BULKY SWEATERS AND HEAVY WINTER CLOTHING!
IT WASN'T UNTIL THE FIRST NUMBING LABOR PAINS BEGAN THAT HE FINALLY BROUGHT HER TO GRANNY!
BUT...SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG! TERRIBLY WRONG! THE BABY HAD BEEN STILLBORN...AND NOW THE PAIN...THE PAIN WITH HER OWN TREASONOUS WOMB...WAS SLOWLY BUT SURELY...KILLING HER!

AND...AS THE PAIN-WRACKED GIRL WRITHES IN BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TORMENT, THE SMUG BUT HANDSOME BILLY LAUGHS, BOTH PLEASED AND RELIEVED AT THE WAY THINGS HAVE WORKED OUT!
THE GIRL WAS IN SO MUCH PAIN, SHE NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED WHAT I WAS DOING!
SO FAR YOU'VE MADE HALF THE GIRLS IN THE COUNTY PREGNANT! AND WE'VE MADE A SMALL FORTUNE "HELPING" THEM OUT OF THEIR PREDICAMENT... ONE WAY OR ANOTHER!
THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE, GRANNY! I THOUGHT FOR SURE I'D BE A DADDY THIS TIME!
YOU DID A FINE JOB, BILLY! WE COULDN'T GET HER TO ABORT THE DAMN THING! BUT IT WAS EASY ENOUGH TO STRANGLE THE BABY IN ITS OWN UMBILICAL CORD AS IT WAS BEING BORN!
WE RE GONNA HAVE TO MOVE ON PRETTY SOON, THOUGH, GRANNY! IF THESE LITTLE HICK GIRLS START COMPARING NOTES, WE COULD BE IN BIG TROUBLE! AND WE'VE ALREADY GOT THE SHERIFF IN THREE COUNTIES LOOKING FOR US!
THE UNSCRUPULOUS WORDS DO NOT GO UNNOTICED! FOR, AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, THE DEAD THINGS' AIMLESS WANDERINGS HAVE BROUGHT THEM TO THIS VERY SPOT!
THE MUCK MONSTERS SHUDDER IN ABJECT HORROR AT BILLY'S UTTER RUTHLESSNESS...
...AS THE FETID ISSUE OF HIS LOINS CLAWS ITS WAY UP A MOSS-CHOKED BANK...A BORN-AGAIN UNDEAD INFANT!
UNLIKE THE OTHERS BIRTHED BY THE REEKING SWAMP, IT KNOWS NO JOY OR COMPASSION...HAVING BEEN DENIED THOSE FEELINGS BEFORE TASTING THE WARMTH OF LIFE!
INSTINCTIVELY, IT IS DRIVEN TO SEEK ITS MOTHER...
...AND WOE TO ANY WHO DARE TRY TO GET IN ITS WAY!

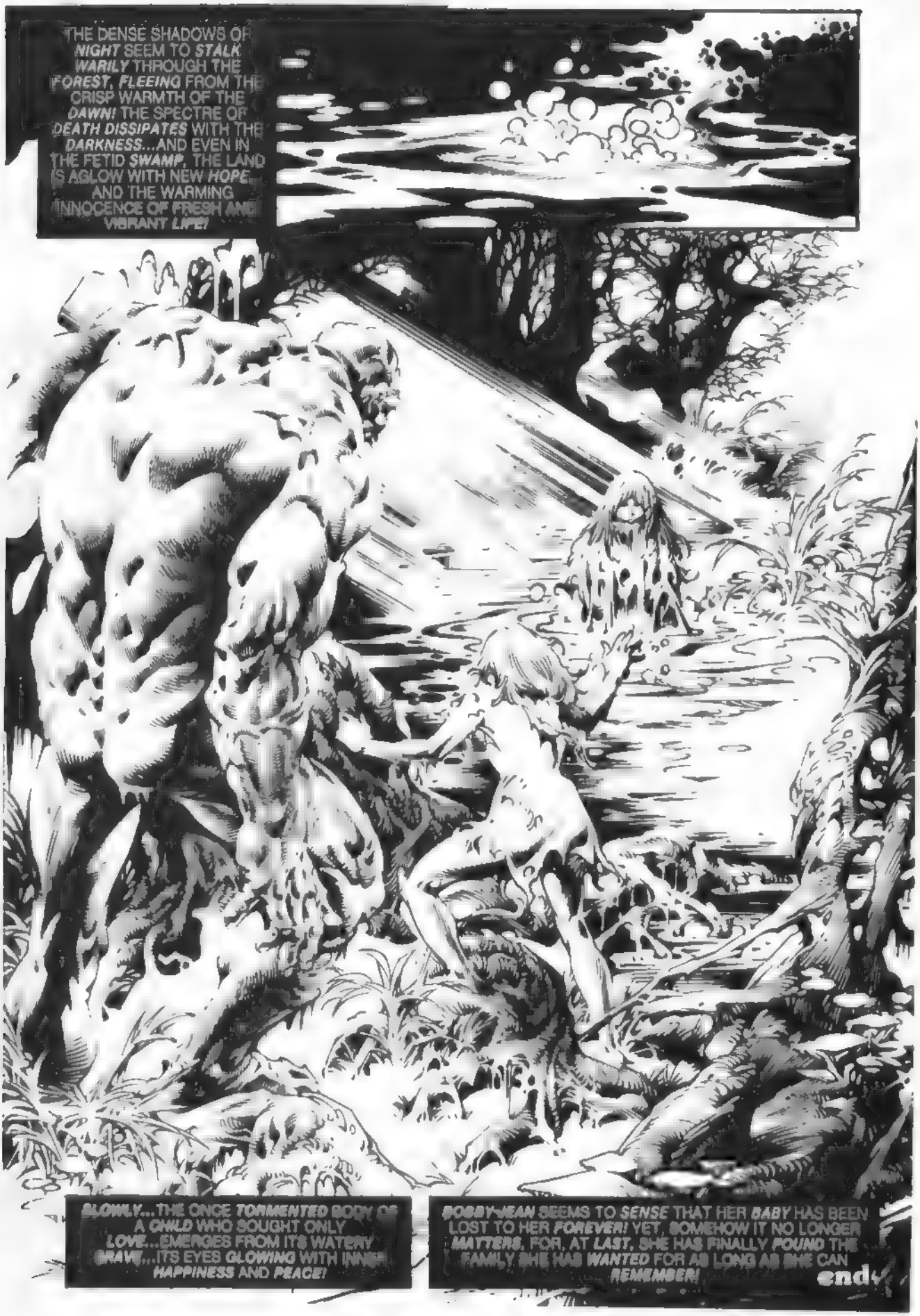
IN HER ROOM, BOBBY-JEAN SHUDDERS FITFULLY AND STIFLES A NUMBING SCREAM...AS PAIN JABS LIKE A KNIFE TWISTING WITHIN HER DEBILITATED WOMB!
SHE HAS BEEN BLEEDING SPASMODICALLY SINCE THE CHILD WAS RIPPED FROM INSIDE HER!
BUT NOW IT IS WORSE...MUCH WORSE! THERE IS BLOOD ON HER THIGHS, HER LEGS, HER BEDDING.. ! FAR MORE BLOOD THAN SHE HAS EVER SEEN IN HER LIFE!
HELPLESSLY, SHE STARES AT HER OWN SLOWLY EBBING LIFE FLUIDS! SHE KNOWS INSTINCTIVELY THAT BY THE TIME A DOCTOR CAN BE SUMMONED, SHE WILL BE DEAD!
BOBBY-JEAN HONEY...CAN I COME IN? I–?
GASP! CHILD! OH, CHILD! YOU YOU'RE HURT! THAT BLOOD–!
THE TERRIFIED, HEMMORRHAGING GIRL PUSHES PAST HER MOTHER, AND THE NIGHT-CHOKED WOODS!
G-GRANNY'S! G-GOT TO GET TO GRANNY'S!
O-ONLY SHE CAN HELP ME!
G-GOT TO MAKE HER .ST-STOP THE .THE BLEEDING...
B-BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

BILLY, MEANWHILE, SAUNTERS COMPLACENTLY FROM HIS GRANNY'S CABIN...OUT TO MAKE HIS NIGHTLY ROUNDS AMONG THE GIRLS TO WHOM HE'S PLEDGED HIS LOVE!
POOR, SIMPLE BOBBY-JEAN! SHE WAS THE BIGGEST SUCKER OF THEM ALL!
IT'S TIME I LOOKED IN ON THAT CRAWFORD GIRL... AND THE CALDWELL TWINS! HAH! MY GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE! TWO OF THEM EXPECTING .. AND NEITHER KNOWING I'M THE PROUD PAPA-TO-BE OF THE OTHER'S BABY!
SUDDENLY...BILLY HEARS AN ODD, SKITTERING NOISE!
HEY! WHAT'S THAT? LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF ANIMAL CREEPIN' THROUGH THE BUSHES!
CAN'T MAKE IT OUT! BUT, IT–! GOOD GOD! IT'S COMIN' RIGHT FOR ME!
BEFORE THE BOY CAN FLEE...
...SOMEHOW SENSING...KNOWING...THAT THIS HUMAN MONSTER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT HAVING BEEN ROBBED OF A NATURAL LIFE!
..THE TINY CHILD-MONSTER LUNGES FOR HIS LEG!
WITH INCREDIBLE STRENGTH, IT PULLS THE YOUTH TO THE GROUND .
IT KNOWS THAT BILLY IS ITS FATHER! AND WITH ARMS LIKE STEEL BANDS AND TEETH LIKE RIPPING SAWBLADES, IT ONLY WANTS TO RETURN ITS DADDY'S LOVE IN KIND!
AAAAAGHHHH!
THAT SCREAM...! IT . IT'S BILLY! OH GOD! HE...HE SOUNDS LIKE HE'S DYING!

CLUTCHING HER SIDE, LEGS TREMBLING, BOBBY-JEAN FINALLY WEAKLY...STUMBLES ONTO GRANNY'S RICKETY PORCH!
G-GRANNY ...H-HELP ME PLEASE!
I I'M BLEEDIN', GRANNY BLEEDIN' BAD! I I THINK I'M DYING!
YOU CRAZY TRAMP! THERE'S NOTHIN' ME..OR ANYONE...CAN DO FOR YOU NOW!
ALL YOU DID WAS LEAVE A TRAIL OF BLOOD FOR THE SHERIFF TO FOLLOW!
BE OFF WITH YOU, GIRL! YOU'VE CAUSED ME ENOUGH TROUBLE!
GO ON, GET OUT OF HERE!
DIE IN THE WOODS LIKE ANY OTHER ANIMAL!
THE GIRL FALLS TO THE GROUND, SOBBING, AS THE OLD WOMAN VIOLENTLY SLAMS HER DOOR! LURKING IN THE SHADOWS OF THE WOODS, THE STEELY EYES AND EARS OF MARVIN HAVE SEEN AND HEARD IT ALL!
AND THAT PART OF HIM WHICH IS STILL HUMAN...BURIED BENEATH MOUNDS OF MUSCLED MUCK, WEEPS FOR THE CHILD-WOMAN...FOR HE KNOWS WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE UNLOVED!

ALMOST *REVERENTLY*, THE PETIT MAN-MONSTER DROPS ON ONE KNEE AND GENTLY *LIFTS* THE GIRL IN HIS POWERFUL *ARMS!*
DELIRIOUS WITH *FEVER*, BOBBY-JEAN RESTS HER HEAD AGAINST THE CREATURE'S MOSSY SHOULDER, KNOWING WITH A DELIRIOUS *CERTAINTY* THAT THIS *MONSTROUS ANGEL* HAS BEEN SENT FROM *HEAVEN* TO UNITE *HER* AND HER STILLBORN BABY ...FOR ALL *ETERNITY!*
THE LONG-TORMENTED TEENAGER *SMILES* WEAKLY...
...AND BREATHES ONE LAST LONG, SHUDDERING *BREATH!*
MARVIN *KNOWS* THAT THE GIRL IS FINALLY AT *PEACE*...HER EARTHLY SUFFERING FINALLY AT AN *END!* MOMENTARILY, HIS THOUGHTS TURN TO THE BUBBLING *WATERS*...BUT THEN HE REMEMBERS THAT THEIR MYSTICAL LIFE-GIVING PROPERTIES ARE *NO MORE!*
STILL, HE SENSES THAT THE GIRL SHOULD BE WITH HER *BABY!* SHE WOULD, NO DOUBT, HAVE *WANTED* IT THAT WAY! SO, GENTLY...*VERY* GENTLY, HE LOWERS HER FRAIL BODY...INTO BRACKISH GREY-BROWN *WATERS!*

THE CURRENT CATCHES THE BODY IN ITS SURGING GRIP! THE LIMP FORM SPINS SLOWLY ONCE, TWICE THEN DISAPPEARS FROM MORTAL SIGHT!
SHE SHE WON'T LEAVE ME BE!
GO AWAY, I TELL YOU! INTO THE SWAMP WITH YOU!
SHE AIN'T LISTENIN'! SHE'S STILL THERE!
I'LL MAKE HER WISH SHE'D NEVER LAID EYES ON ME!
SOMETHIN' SCRATCHIN' AT THE DOOR! THAT GIRL AGAIN!
BUT...BEFORE THE OLD WOMAN CAN REACH FOR THE DOOR...IT SUDDENLY VIOLENTLY BURSTS OPEN...AND UTTER FEAR CREEPS THROUGH HER RACING HEART!
IN THE DIM RECESSES OF ITS TINY MIND, THE NIGHTMARISH SWAMP-CHILD VAGUELY REMEMBERS THIS SEEKING CABIN! IT IS HERE, IT KNOWS, WHERE IT HAD BEEN VIOLENTLY STRANGLED...MERCILESSLY DEPRIVED OF LIFE!
AND THIS WOMAN...THIS UGLY SHRIEKING WITCH...! IT WAS HER EYES IT HAD LOOKED INTO AS IT VAINLY GASPED FOR BREATH!
SHE MUST DIE! THE TERRIBLE CHILD-MONSTER KNOWS! THIS VICIOUS, MURDEROUS HAG MUST BE MADE TO PAY FOR HER BRUTAL SINS!
TERRIFIED, RECOILING IN FRIGHT, THE OLD WOMAN KNOWS NOT WHERE THIS FOUL LITTLE MONSTER HAS SLITHERED FROM! SHE KNOWS ONLY THAT IT WANTS TO KILL HER!
INSTINCTIVELY, SHE LASHES OUT AGAIN AND AGAIN, STABBING, HACKING, SLASHING, AS SHE FEELS THE CHILD-MONSTER CHEWING THROUGH HER VERY FLESH!
ITS BLOOD-SLICKED HANDS REACH FOR HER FLAILING HEART...AND WITH ITS FINAL WANING STRENGTH, IT CRUSHES THE ORGAN LIKE A SOFT, OVERRIPE FRUIT...
...BEFORE SUCCUMBING TO THE WARMING BLACKNESS OF DEATH...FOR THE SECOND AND FINAL TIME!


THE DENSE SHADOWS OF NIGHT SEEM TO STALK WARILY THROUGH THE FOREST, FLEEING FROM THE CRISP WARMTH OF THE DAWN! THE SPECTRE OF DEATH DISSIPATES WITH THE DARKNESS...AND EVEN IN THE FETID SWAMP, THE LAND IS AGLOW WITH NEW HOPE, AND THE WARMING INNOCENCE OF FRESH AND VIBRANT LIFE!
SLOWLY...THE ONCE TORMENTED BODY OF A CHILD WHO SOUGHT ONLY LOVE...EMERGES FROM ITS WATERY GRAVE...ITS EYES GLOWING WITH INNER HAPPINESS AND PEACE!
BOBBY-JEAN SEEMS TO SENSE THAT HER BABY HAS BEEN LOST TO HER FOREVER! YET, SOMEHOW IT NO LONGER MATTERS, FOR, AT LAST, SHE HAS FINALLY FOUND THE FAMILY SHE HAS WANTED FOR AS LONG AS SHE CAN REMEMBER!
end

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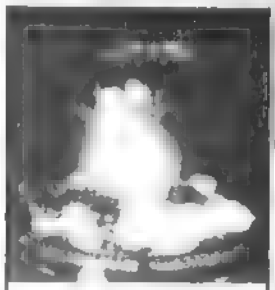

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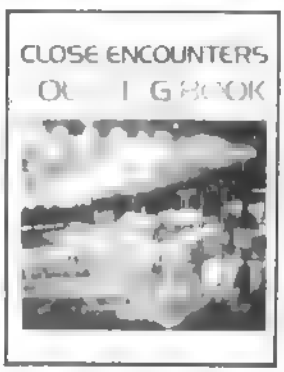

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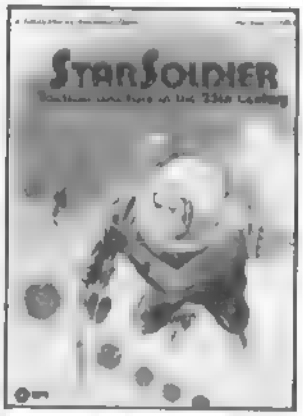

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Author: **RICH MARGOPOULOS**/Illustrator: **JUN LOFAMIA**

THE WHOLE THING *STARTED* JUST A LITTLE OVER A *YEAR* AGO...WHEN THE *BIG BOMBS* HIT...AND *HIT HARD!* THE ENTIRE *EASTERN SEABOARD* HAD BEEN ALL BUT *OBLITERATED!*

A *SOVIET ORBITAL LAUNCHER* HAD GONE *HAYWIRE* AND *PUMMELLED* ITS PRE-PROGRAMMED TARGETS WITH VERY, VERY DIRTY *ENHANCED RADIATION* WEAPONRY...PLUS A COUPLE OF DOZEN ASSORTED *CHEMICAL* AND *BIOLOGICAL WARFARE BOMBS* FOR GOOD MEASURE!

NO ONE KNEW FOR *SURE WHY* IT HAPPENED! YET, *AMERICAN RETALIATION,* AS EXPECTED, WAS *SWIFT* AND *STRONG!*

NOT THAT IT *MATTERED* MUCH THAT *SOVIET RUSSIA* WAS NOW LITTLE MORE THAN ONE *MASSIVE,* SMOLDERING *CRATER!* THE SIMPLE FACT OF THE MATTER WAS THAT *NEITHER NATION* WOULD *EVER* BE THE *SAME* AGAIN!

JUST BEFORE THE BOMBS HAD *DROPPED,* WAILING *AIR RAID* SIRENS HAD *WARNED MILLIONS* OF THE *INCOMING DANGERS!* SOME *HEEDED* THE WARNING AND SOUGHT *SHELTER* IN MANHATTAN'S TEEMING *SUBWAY TUNNELS! MOST,* HOWEVER, WERE *DEEP-FRIED* THE *MOMENT* THE WEAPONS *HIT!*

THOSE WHO WEREN'T *KILLED INSTANTLY* WERE SUBJECTED TO THE COMBINED EFFECTS OF *CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL,* AND *INTENSIVE RADIATION* PERMEATION! MANY MILLIONS *MORE* DIED *SLOWLY* AND *HORRIBLY*...IN THE MOST HORRENDOUS MANNER POSSIBLE!

YET, PERHAPS *THEY* WERE THE *LUCKY ONES!* FOR IN THE LONG SUMMER MONTHS IMMEDIATELY *FOLLOWING* THE HOLOCAUST, THE *FINAL* AND PERHAPS MOST *FRIGHTFUL NIGHTMARE* OF *ALL* BEGAN TO TAKE ITS TOLL AMONG THE HAPLESS *SURVIVORS!*

LIBERTY AND HER HUSBAND, *JACK,* HAD BEEN TWO OF THE *FORTUNATE* ONES! THEY'D *MADE* IT INTO THE *SUBWAYS* AS THE *BOMBS* WERE *RAINING* FROM THE *SKY!* THEY'D *EVEN SURVIVED* THE MONTHS OF *DEGRADATION, HARDSHIP,* AND *HUNGER* IN THE *TUNNELS!*

AS IT *WAS,* THEY WERE *SEPARATED* IN THE *MELEE* WHICH *FOLLOWED!* THEY *TRIED* TO STAY TOGETHER AS THEY *RAN* FROM THE DROOLING, SCREECHING *MUTANTS...RACING* THROUGH THE DARK, ENDLESS, UNDERGROUND *MAZE!*

SOMEHOW, SHE MANAGED TO *SHAKE* HER PURSUERS AND *REACH* THE BURNED-OUT *SURFACE!* BUT...HER BELOVED *JACK*...WAS *GONE!*

THE THOUSANDS WHO HAD *REMAINED* IN THE DARK, *HUMID CONTINES OF THE SUBWAY SYSTEM,* TO *ESCAPE THE* POISONED AIR OF THE DEVASTATED *SURFACE,* BEGAN TO *DEVOLVE* IN TRUE DOOMSDAY TRADITION! ALMOST *OVERNIGHT,* THEY WERE *TRANSFORMED* INTO HIDEOUS, PUS-SPEWING *MUTANTS!*

THEY ALMOST *DIDN'T* SURVIVE, HOWEVER, THE NIGHT THEIR FELLOW *TUNNEL DWELLERS* WENT *MUTER* ON THEM! IF *LIBERTY* HADN'T *HEARD* THEM *CREEPING* THROUGH THE *DARKNESS* AS SHE AND JACK LAY *SLEEPING*...SHE AND HER *HUSBAND* WOULD HAVE ENDED UP ON A *SPIT!*

SHE *KNEW* HE WASN'T *DEAD!* HE *COULDN'T* BE! HE WAS THE *BEST* DAMNED *COP* THE CITY EVER *HAD!* HE WAS A *SURVIVOR!* HE'D GOTTEN *OUT, TOO!* SHE WAS ABSOLUTELY *SURE* OF IT!

THE MEMORIES FADE, AND LIBERTY WATCHES AS STARVING WOLF-CATS EMERGE FROM THE SHADOWS! THEY RIP LARGE CHUNKS OF FLESH FROM THE MUTANT SHE HAS JUST DESTROYED! SHE SIGHS, TURNS AWAY, HER HEAVY BOOTS RINGING ON THE CRACKED STONE PAVEMENT!
THEY RE EVERYWHERE, DAMN THEM! THEY'RE NOT JUST IN THE SUBWAYS ANY LONGER! THEY'RE SWARMING OVER THE ENTIRE CITY!
THERE'S SO FEW NORMAL PEOPLE LEFT ..AND THE MUTANTS ARE BUTCHERING THEM EATING THEM, FASTER THAN THEY CAN GET OFF THIS BOMBED OUT ISLAND!
EVER SINCE THAT NIGHT IN THE TUNNEL...THE LAST NIGHT SHE EVER SAW JACK...SHE HAS SLAIN THE MUTANTS WITHOUT HESITATION! SHE CANNOT ABIDE THEIR SIGHT, THEIR SMELL, THEIR SLIMY TOUCH! THEY REVOLT HER...BUT MORE THAN THAT...THEY REMIND HER OF THE LIVING HELL THAT HER WORLD HAS BECOME!
BUT.. THEY HAVEN'T GOTTEN JACK! THEY'LL NEVER GET HIM! HE'S TOO SMART FOR THEM! I'LL FIND HIM I KNOW I WILL!
AND WHEN I DO... WE'LL ESCAPE TO THE WEST COAST TOGETHER! THERE, WE CAN LIVE NORMAL LIVES...JUST LIKE THE WAY IT USED TO BE!
AND, YET, WITH EACH PASSING DAY, LIBERTY REALIZES THAT THE CHANCES OF EVER SEEING JACK AGAIN GROW MORE AND MORE REMOTE! THE CITY IS SO LARGE...WITH SO MANY NICHES TO HIDE! AND HIDE ONE MUST, TO AVOID THE EVER-INCREASING MUTANT HORDE!!!
M-MUTANTS, CHILD! A..A BAND OF THEM! TH-THEY WERE ABOUT T-TO EAT ME U-UNTIL YOU ARRIVED! D-DON'T LET THEM G-GET... ME P-PLEASE!
WITH DANGER AT EVERY CORNER, MAKING TWENTY BLOCKS A DAY IS GOOD SPEED, MOVING WARILY FROM SHADOW TO FLEETING SHADOW!
I'VE CHECKED WHAT'S LEFT OF OUR OLD APARTMENT THE PRECINCT WHERE JACK AND I WORKED AND ALL OUR FAVORITE HANGOUTS!
THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF HIM ANYWHERE! ALL I CAN DO IS CONTINUE TO ASK AROUND THE CITY TO CHECK WITH ANY NORMAL PERSON I CAN FIND! THERE S SO FEW OF US LEFT... SOMEONE IS BOUND TO HAVE SEEN HIM!
HOT STUFF
SLAP LEATHER

FROM THE MORAL AND LITERAL DECAY OF TIMES SQUARE, LIBERTY MAKES HER WAY TO THE EAST VILLAGE! IN BETTER TIMES, THE SUBWAY COULD'VE TAKEN HER HERE IN TEN MINUTES! NOW...IT TAKES THE BETTER PART OF A DAY!..
A WOMAN! OH MY GOD! SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE LIKE HER SINCE BEFORE THE BOMBS!
SOMEONE'S WATCHING ME FROM INSIDE THAT SHOP! ANOTHER MUTER, NO DOUBT ..GETTING READY TO JUMP ME!
COME ON OUT, HAIRBALL! IF YOU WANT ME YOU'RE IN FOR ONE HELL OF A FIGHT!

NO! WAIT! YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG! I'M NO MUTANT! I'M LIKE YOU... NORMAL! SEE!?
MY NAME IS DIRK! DIRK HAGEN! I'VE BEEN LIVING IN THE VILLAGE SINCE THEY NUKED THIS BIG, OVERCROWDED BURG! I'VE BEEN HIDING BECAUSE OF THE MUTERS!
COME! WE'VE GOT TO GET OFF THE STREET BEFORE THEY SEE US! I'D HATE TO SEE ANYONE AS PRETTY AS YOU END UP AT ONE OF THEIR BARBECUES!

ONCE INSIDE THE MAN'S HIDEAWAY, LIBERTY LETS DOWN HER GUARD TELLING HIM ABOUT HER QUEST FOR HER HUSBAND!
HE'S A LUCKY MAN TO HAVE SOMEONE WHO LOVES HIM SO MUCH! ESPECIALLY SOMEONE LIKE YOU WHO KNOWS HOW TO TAKE CARE OF HERSELF!
AN ENVIABLE ASSORTMENT OF WEAPONRY YOU HAVE, MY DEAR BUT YOU'RE IN NO DANGER HERE! YOU CAN PUT YOUR GUN AND SPEAR ASIDE!
AND MAYBE... YOU AND I CAN GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER A LITTLE BETTER! AFTER ALL ..WHAT YOUR HUSBAND DOESN'T KNOW ..WON'T HURT HIM!

N-NO–! LET ME GO... PLEASE!
LOOSEN UP, DARE NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW! IT'LL BE JUST YOU AND ..!
BEFORE THE MAN CAN COMPLETE HIS THOUGHT ...HE DOUBLES OVER IN EXCRUCIATING PAIN! LIBERTY'S SPEAR GLIDES THROUGH HIS STOMACH ...EFFECTIVELY CURTAILING ANY THOUGHTS OF LOVE!
URK!
YOUR KIND IS WORSE THAN THE MUTERS!
ALL THEY WANT TO DO IS EAT ME!
YOU WANTED SOMETHING FAR MORE DEGRADING!

THE NEXT MORNING, LIBERTY LEAVES THE VILLAGE! SHE EDGES TOWARD THE HUDSON SHORELINE, HOPING PERHAPS THAT JACK'S PASSION FOR THE RIVER WOULD HAVE LURED HIM HERE, AS WELL!
BANG! WHAM! WHANG!
THAT HAMMERING! IT'S COMING FROM THE WATERFRONT! IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S BUILDING SOMETHING! OH, GOD IF ONLY IT COULD BE JACK!
OH! YOU STARTLED ME! I I DIDN T HEAR YOU COMING! I . I'M BUILDING A RAFT... TO TRY TO GET OFF THIS DAMN ISLAND B-BEFORE THE MUTANTS GET TO ME...LIKE LIKE THEY DID MY ...HUSBAND!
DON'T BE FRIGHTENED! I'VE LOST MY HUSBAND, TOO! WE WERE SEPARATED WHEN MUTANTS ATTACKED US! I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR HIM FOR WEEKS! WHEN I HEARD YOUR HAMMERING, I THOUGHT WELL .THAT IT MIGHT BE HIM!
LIAR! YOU'RE NOT LOOKING FOR YOUR HUSBAND! YOU'RE HERE TO STEAL MY RAFT!
YOU RE JUST LIKE THE OTHERS! YOU WANT EVERYTHING I HAVE!
N-NO! WAIT!
REACTING INSTINCTIVELY, LIBERTY LASHES OUT TO PROTECT HERSELF! SHE HAS SEEN THIS ALMOST INSANE PARANOIA AMONG SURVIVORS BEFORE...
KRAKK
...IT SEEMS TO BE ONLY ONE OF THE MANY UNPREDICTABLE EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR WAR THAT THE EXPERTS NEVER ANTICIPATED!
THE DERANGED WOMAN REELS FROM LIBERTY'S BLOW! FOR A MOMENT, SHE SEEMS TO RECOVER HER BALANCE...UNTIL SHE TOPPLES INTO THE MURKY BROWN WATERS...WHERE MUTANT SHARKS ARE INSTANTLY UPON HER!
LIBERTY WATCHES IN HORRIFIED DISBELIEF AS THE GIRL IS VIOLENTLY SHREDDED BY THE MAMMOTH SEA MONSTER! THE BLOOD-STAINED WATERS CHURN WITH THE CREATURE'S TERRIBLE THRASHING, AND AS INSTANTLY AS IT APPEARED, THE MUTATED PREDATOR DISAPPEARS BENEATH THE SLUDGY WAVES!
LIBERTY HADN'T EVEN SUSPECTED THAT SEA LIFE, TOO, HAD BEEN EFFECTED BY THE SOVIET BOMBS! NOW THAT SHE KNEW, SHE'D BE ON HER GUARD ...ANYTIME SHE WAS NEAR THE SHORELINE!
THE POOR WOMAN! I I DIDN'T MEAN FOR HER TO DIE! THERE'S BEEN SO MUCH KILLING! SOMEHOW SOMETIME IT'S GOT TO STOP!

FROM THE WEST SIDE SHORE, *LIBERTY* MAKES HER WAY *SOUTH* INTO THE CITY'S DEVASTATED *FINANCIAL DISTRICT!* BY *NIGHTFALL*, SHE IS ATTRACTED BY A WELCOMING *CAMPFIRE* AND THE *SMELL* OF A STRANGE ROASTING *MEAT!*

WALL STREET

WHO'D BE *FOOL ENOUGH* TO LIGHT A *FIRE* OUT IN THE *OPEN?* IT'LL *ATTRACT* EVERY FLESH-EATING *MUTANT* FROM *HERE* TO *BROOKLYN!*

UNLESS...IT'S SOME SORT OF *MUTER TRAP* TO *LURE* US *NORMALS* INTO THEIR *STEWPOTS!* I'D BETTER BE ON MY *GUARD!*

HELLO THERE! CARE TO *JOIN* ME IN A BITE TO *EAT?* ROAST *RAT* A LA CARTE MAY NOT BE THE *PERFECT MEAT* TO COMPLIMENT A FINE BOTTLE OF *CHATEAU REGAL 84*...

BUT ONCE YOU GET PAST THE *SMELL*, IT CAN BE AWFULLY *TASTY!*

IF I, ER. .CAN'T *INTEREST* YOU IN MY *FOOD*... MAYBE I CAN *BUY* A FEW MOMENTS OF YOUR *TIME!* IT. .IT'S BEEN *MONTHS* SINCE I'VE SEEN ANYONE AS *LOVELY* AS YOU.. AND IT GETS SO *LONELY!*

I'M *FLATTERED!* I'VE NEVER *HAD* SUCH A *TEMPTING OFFER!* BUT...YOU *KNOW* YOUR *MONEY'S NO GOOD!* EVEN IF IT *WERE*...THERE'S ONLY *ONE* THING I'D *WANT* FROM A SWEET OLD GUY LIKE *YOU!*

NAME IT! *ANYTHING* YOU *WANT! ANYTHING* YOU *NEED*, I'LL USE MY *EVERY RESOURCE* TO *GET* YOU! A *HOME*...A *CAR*... A *BABY* OR TWO!

I.. I ONLY WANT MY *MISSING HUSBAND!* HIS NAME IS *JACK FLYNN*...! WE WERE *SEPARATED WEEKS* AGO!

OH MY *GOD*... NOT THE *JACK FLYNN* WHO USED TO BE A *COP!?*

YOU *KNOW* HIM? YOU'VE *SEEN* HIM? *WHERE IS* HE? PLEASE!

I...I'VE *SEEN* HIM! A *COUPLE* OF TIMES! I... I SAW HIM JUST *TODAY! HE* WAS BY THE *BROOKLYN BRIDGE*...*HUNTING!* LOOKING FOR *PEOPLE* TO EAT!

P-PEOPLE!? YOU'RE *LYING!* JACK WOULD *NEVER*--!

IT'S *TRUE!* HE... HE ALMOST *CAUGHT* ME ONCE.. UNTIL I HID IN THE *SUBWAY!* HE WOULDN'T GO DOWN *THERE*...IT WAS LIKE HE WAS *AFRAID!* HE HAD A *GIRL* TODAY! SHE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN *TEN YEARS OLD!* HE HE WAS *GUTTING* HER AND *CUTTING* HER INTO *STEAKS!*

LIAR! LIAR!

JACK *WOULDN'T* KILL A *CHILD!* NOT *MY* JACK! NOT NOT MY *HUSBAND!*

BDOW!

BOW! BOW!

HE JUST *WOULDN'T!*

LIBERTY *WANDERS* INTO THE *DARKNESS*, HER MIND A *JUMBLE* OF CONFUSED, SKITTERING *THOUGHTS!* SHE PAYS LITTLE *ATTENTION* TO *WHERE* SHE'S *GOING*...TOTALLY *LOST* IN THE NIGHTMARISH *THOUGHT* THAT THE OLD MAN HAD TOLD HER...JUST MIGHT BE *TRUE!*

THIS *HOLOCAUST*...IT MADE PEOPLE DO *INSANE THINGS!* EVEN *LIBERTY* CAN ATTEST TO *THAT*...BEAUTIFUL *SANE* LIBERTY WHO HAD TAKEN *THREE HUMAN LIVES* IN *HALF* AS MANY *DAYS!*

SUDDENLY...FROM THE *SHADOWS*, SHE HEARS THE FAMILIAR *SKITTERING* AND A *PAIR* OF MUTANTS ARE *INSTANTLY* UPON HER!

JUST AS INSTANTLY, *BOTH* ARE *DEAD!* AS LIBERTY STANDS *STARING* AT THEIR LIFELESS BODIES GRIM *REALIZATION HAMMERS* ITS WAY INTO HER *MIND!*

SUDDENLY YET *ANOTHER* SOUND *ALERTS* LIBERTY'S SCREAMING SENSES TO *MORE* IMMINENT *DANGER!*

LIB! LIBERTY! IT'S *ME! JACK!*

IT'S *TRUE!* I'M AS *BAD* AS *THEM! WORSE! I'VE* KILLED MY *OWN KIND!* I I'VE BECOME A *PSYCHOPATHIC KILLING MACHINE!*

MINDLESS, ACTING MORE OUT OF *REFLEX* THAN *RATIONAL THOUGHT*, SHE *SPINS ABOUT* AND *EMPTIES* HER *WEAPON INTO* THE APPROACHING FIGURE!

BOW! BOW! BOW!

L-LIBBY–!

NOOOOOOO!

AS SUDDENLY AS THE MAN *FALLS*, LIBERTY *REALIZES* HER *MISTAKE!* SHE SEES THE *FACE* ...THE HANDSOME FEATURES OF HER *HUSBAND...CONTORTED* IN AN AGONIZED *DEATH-GRIMACE!* SHE KNOWS THAT HIS *DEATH* IS *NOT* AN *ACCIDENT*...BUT MORE THE WILLFULLY *MALICIOUS ACT* OF A DESPERATELY *INSANE* MIND!

OH MY *GOD*... *NO! NOOO!* WHAT HAVE I *DONE? JACK!!*

JACK!!

SHE *FALLS*, AND *KNEELS*, THE TEARS A VERITABLE *FLOODTIDE*, FLOWING NOT ONLY FOR *JACK* BUT FOR *HERSELF*. AS WELL! *SOMEHOW*, SHE UNDERSTANDS THAT HER *SANITY* IS UTTERLY AND IRRETRIEVABLY *LOST*...THAT SHE HAS BECOME JUST ONE MORE *VICTIM* OF THE UNPREDICTABLE *AFTEREFFECTS* OF AN ALL OUT *NUCLEAR ARMAGEDDON!*

WAAAAA

YET, WITH *MADNESS*, COMES NUMBING *VISIONS!* AS SHE *CRADLES* THE BODY OF THE *MAN* SHE *LOVES*, WITHIN HER *MIND*, SHE IS CRADLING HER OWN *NEWBORN MUTANT CHILD!* WOULD IT BE SO *BAD* TO CARRY THE *BABY* OF A *MUTER*, SHE MUSES?

A TWISTED *SMILE* CONTORTS HER LIPS...AS SHE DECIDES THAT IT WOULD *NOT!* AND *THAT* IS HOW THE MUTANTS *FIND* HER...JUST BEFORE THEY *DRAG* HER INTO THE *TUNNELS* ...AND PREPARE THE DUMBLY CATATONIC LIBERTY...FOR THE COMMUNITY *STEW POT!*

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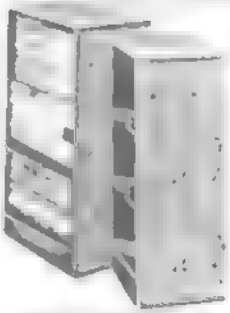

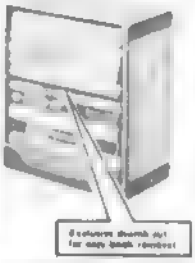

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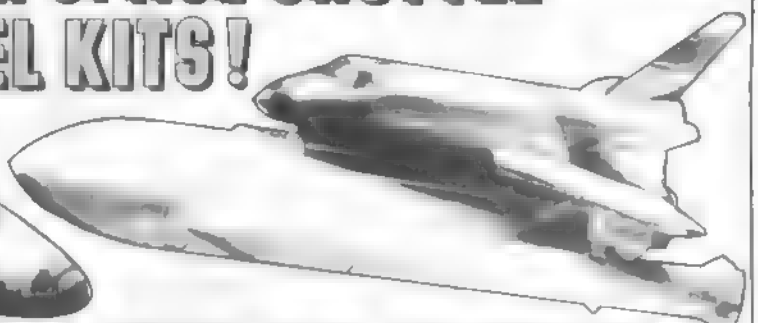
MOONRAKER

MOONRAKER SPACE SHUTTLE MODEL KITS!



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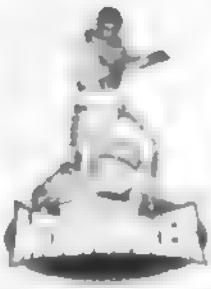

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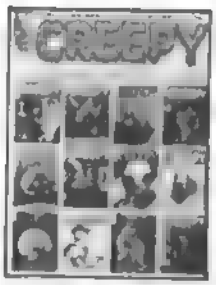

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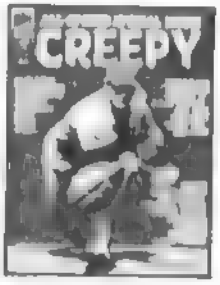

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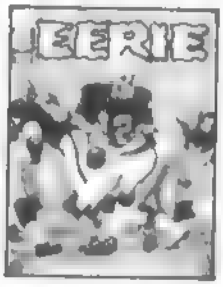

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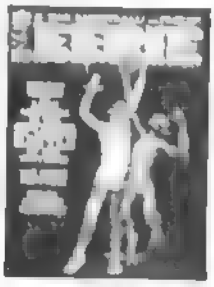

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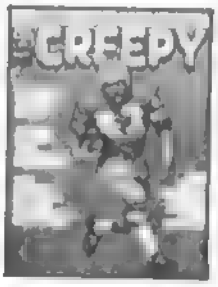

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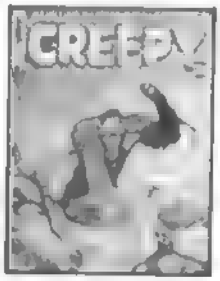

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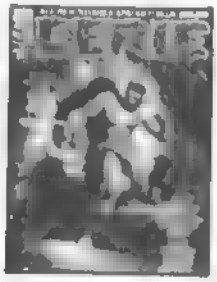

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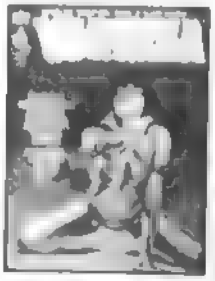

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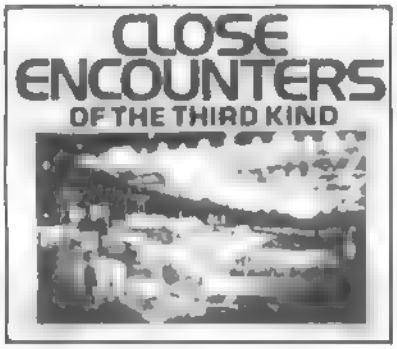

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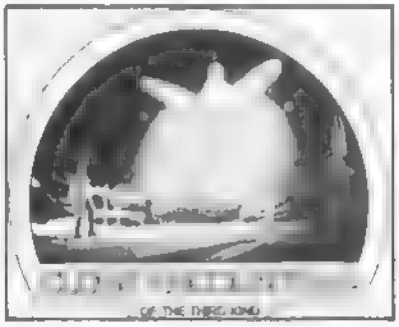

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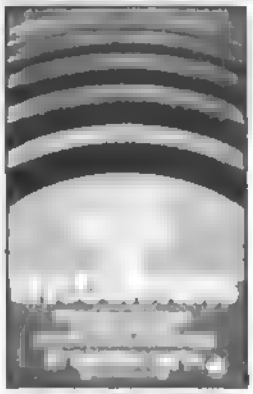

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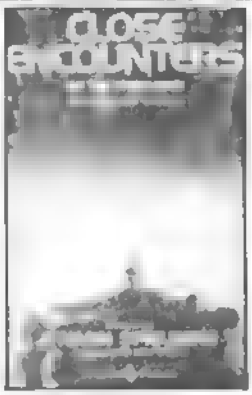

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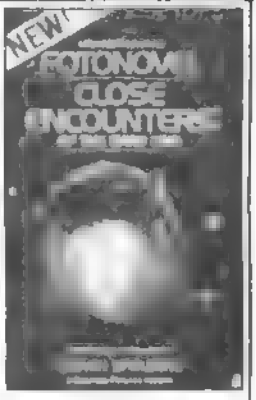

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MERCENARY!

Author: NICOLA CUTI/Illustrator: PAT BOYETTE

BECAUSE I'D FAILED *MISERABLY* AT MY APPOINTED TASK, I KNEW IT WAS TIME TO *LEAVE LOS ANDOS!* EL PRESIDENTE DIDN'T KNOW *ME* FROM *ADAM*, BUT IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF *TIME* BEFORE HE *BEAT* MY *IDENTITY* OUT OF HIS FAITHLESS *WIFE!*

THE PRESIDENTIAL *POLICE* WILL BE LOOKING FOR A MAN IN A *JOGGING SUIT...!*

BEST THING FOR *ME* TO DO IS TO FIND A NEW *WARDROBE... QUICK!*

SORRY, FRIEND! *I* NEED THESE DUDS ALOT *MORE* THAN *YOU* DO!

I MAKE IT A *POINT NEVER* TO VENTURE INTO A *HOSTILE NATION* WITHOUT HAVING A *QUICK* WAY *OUT!* YOU NEVER *KNOW WHEN* IT'LL COME IN *HANDY!*

MIGUEL! GET MY *PLANE* READY, BUDDY! IT'S TIME FOR *THIS BIRD* TO *MIGRATE!*

BY THE TIME EL PRESIDENTE'S *GESTAPO* ARRIVED AT THE *AIRPORT*, MY BATTERED WORLD WAR II *MESSERSCHMITT* WAS *STEAMROLLING* DOWN THE *RUNWAY!* I TOOK A *BULLET* IN THE *ENGINE*, BUT WITH *LUCK*, I KNEW I COULD *MAKE* IT TO A NEIGHBORING *ISLAND NATION*...ONE THAT JUST *MIGHT* HAVE SOME *USE* FOR A SUDDENLY *UNEMPLOYED FREEBOOTER!*

I'D HEARD THAT THE ISLAND GOVERNMENT OF *SAN FORIZO* DIDN'T LIKE *LOS ANDOS'* DICTATORIAL POLICIES ANY MORE THAN *I* DID! IF I HAD SOMETHING TO *OFFER* THEM THEY'D NO DOUBT *WELCOME* ME WITH *OPEN ARMS!*

SAN FORIZO... MY NAME IS *SKINNER!* LET ME *SPEAK* TO SOMEONE IN *AUTHORITY!*

SAN FORIZO CALLING *UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT!* YOU ARE ON AN OFFICIAL *GOVERNMENT RADIO* FREQUENCY! PLEASE *IDENTIFY!*

CUT THE *CRAP*, MISTER! I'VE GOT A *FIGHTER PLANE* FOR SALE! PUT SOMEONE ON WHO CAN *BUY* IT!

EVERY *BUSINESS TRANSACTION* REQUIRES A MINIMAL AMOUNT OF *MUTUAL TRUST* AND A MODICUM OF *GOOD FAITH!*

THIS IS *GENERAL SIERRA!* YOU WISH TO *SELL* AN *AIRPLANE*, SENOR?

I'VE GOT ONE SLIGHTLY USED *MESSERSCHMITT*, GENERAL! I CAN LET YOU HAVE IT FOR A *PITTANCE!* SAY...*TWENTY THOUSAND* AMERICAN *DOLLARS!*

AH, SENOR . YOU ARE THE *FUGITIVE* FROM *LOS ANDOS, SI?*

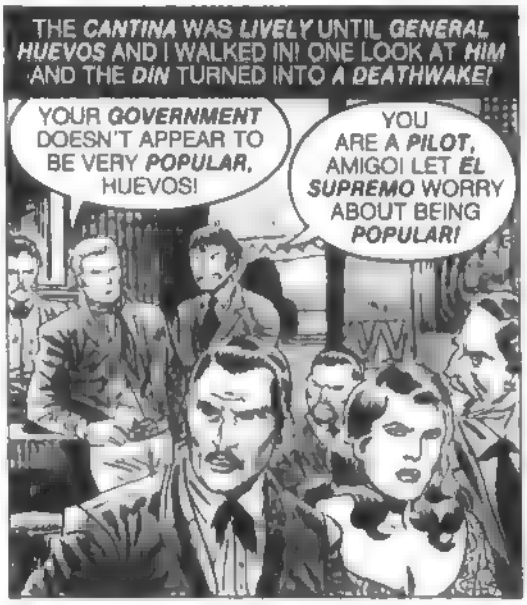
ON THE *OTHER HAND*, THERE'S NO *HARM* IN TAKING WHATEVER *PRECAUTIONS* ONE *CAN!*

OKAY! TEN THOUSAND AND IT'S *YOURS!* WHEN I HAVE THE *MONEY* AND AM SURE NO *POLICE* OR *SOLDIERS* ARE AROUND, I'LL TELL YOU HOW TO REMOVE THE *TIME BOMB* I'VE INSTALLED IN THE *COCKPIT!*

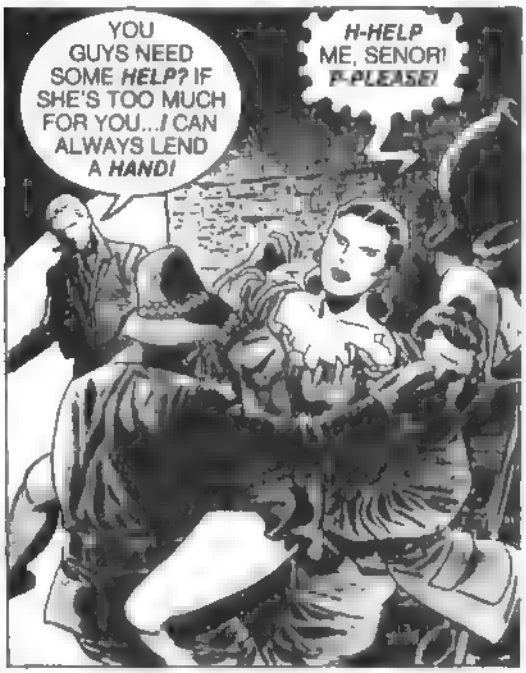
YOU ARE A *PRUDENT MAN*, SENOR! THE *MONEY* WILL BE *WAITING* FOR YOU WHEN YOU *ARRIVE!*

BY THE TIME I'D TOUCHED DOWN, I WAS FEELING MIGHTY PLEASED WITH MYSELF! I HAD PLENTY OF MONEY...BUT BETTER STILL...!
NO ONE KNOWS ME HERE!
SENOR SKINNER! YOU WILL COME WITH ME, POR FAVOR!
HUH!?
I AM GENERAL HUEVOS! EL SUPREMO WISHES TO SEE YOU!
EL WHO?
OUR PRESIDENTE, SENOR! YOU MAY CONSIDER IT AN HONOR! RARELY DOES EL SUPREMO ALLOW ANYONE AN AUDIENCE...LET ALONE A PETTY EXTORTIONIST SUCH AS YOURSELF!
WASN'T ALL THAT FAMILIAR WITH SAN FORIZO OR ITS POLITICS! I'D NEVER HEARD OF THIS EL SUPREMO! YET, I KNEW PRETTY MUCH WHAT TO EXPECT! ALL THESE ISLAND DESPOTS WORE THE SAME RUTHLESS MASK!
COME IN, SENOR! I HAVE HEARD MUCH ABOUT YOU! I KNOW YOU ARE A MAN WHO WOULD NOT OBJECT TO DOUBLING HIS WEALTH!
YOU RE TALKING MY KIND OF LANGUAGE, EL!
THESE ARE TIMES WHEN A GOOD PRESIDENT NEEDS SOMEONE HE CAN RELY UPON. SOMEONE RESOURCEFUL AND DEPENDABLE! FOR A FEW DAYS OF YOUR TIME, I CAN REWARD YOU WELL!
I'M LISTENING!
YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TO FLY A COURIER TO PUERTO CRUZ! HE WILL BE CARRYING A BRIEFCASE OF VALUABLE PAPERS!
IF YOU ARRIVE SAFELY, I WILL PAY YOU FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS IN GOLD! IF YOU FAIL ME...!
YOUR TRUST AND GENEROSITY ARE EXCELLED ONLY BY YOUR GOOD JUDGEMENT, EXCELLENCY! I DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD 'FAIL!'
CLIK!

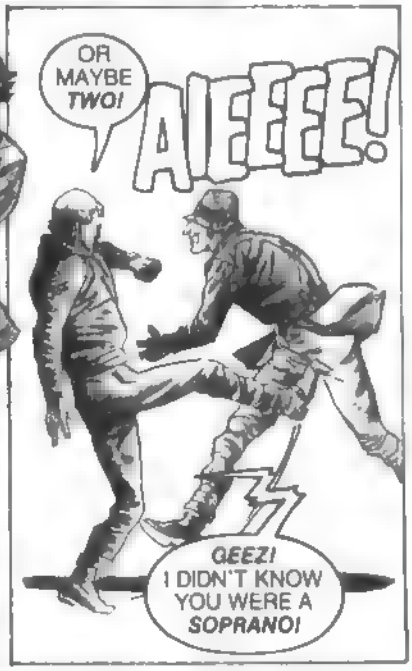
EL PRESIDENTE LIKES YOU, SENOR! AS YOU SAY, HE IS A MAN OF GOOD JUDGEMENT! COME! LET ME BUY YOU A DRINK!
I NEVER REFUSE A GENERAL!


THE CANTINA WAS LIVELY UNTIL GENERAL HUEVOS AND I WALKED IN! ONE LOOK AT HIM AND THE DIN TURNED INTO A DEATHWAKE!
YOUR GOVERNMENT DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE VERY POPULAR, HUEVOS!
YOU ARE A PILOT, AMIGO! LET EL SUPREMO WORRY ABOUT BEING POPULAR!

I LEFT EARLY BECAUSE I STILL HAD TO FIND A PLACE TO SPEND THE NIGHT! AS I PASSED A NEARBY ALLEY...I SAW SOMETHING THAT MADE MY BLOOD RUN COLD!
THOSE MEN...
.. THEY'RE MUGGING A WOMAN!

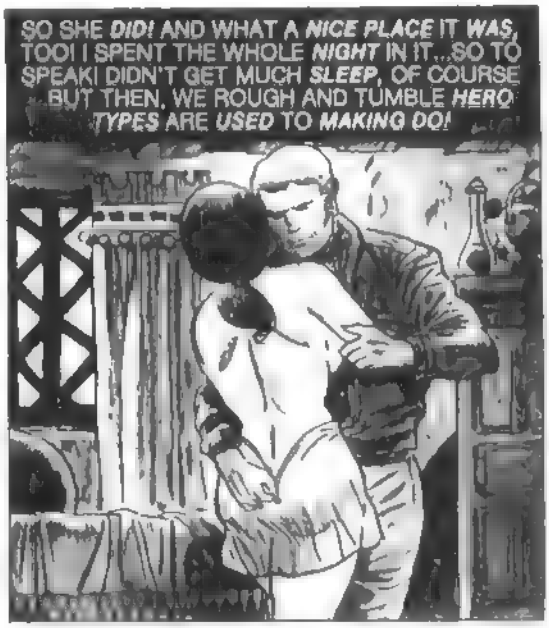

YOU GUYS NEED SOME HELP? IF SHE'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU...I CAN ALWAYS LEND A HAND!
H-HELP ME, SENOR! P-PLEASE!

KRUNK!
DON'T NEED A HAND? OKAY! HOW ABOUT A FOOT?


OR MAYBE TWO!
AIEEEE!
GEEZ! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A SOPRANO!

STOP HIM, SENOR! KILL HIM OR SURELY YOU WILL REGRET HAVING LET THEM ESCAPE!
AW, LET 'EM GO!

THEY'RE NOT IMPORTANT! BESIDES... I STILL HAVE TO FIND A PLACE TO SLEEP TONIGHT!
I HAVE A PLACE


SO SHE DID! AND WHAT A NICE PLACE IT WAS, TOO! I SPENT THE WHOLE NIGHT IN IT...SO TO SPEAK! DIDN'T GET MUCH SLEEP, OF COURSE BUT THEN, WE ROUGH AND TUMBLE HERO TYPES ARE USED TO MAKING DO!

YOU'RE IN TROUBLE, YOU KNOW, SENOR!
DON'T TELL ME! YOU'RE THE WIFE OF EL SUPREMO AND HE'S AN EXTREMELY JEALOUS MAN!

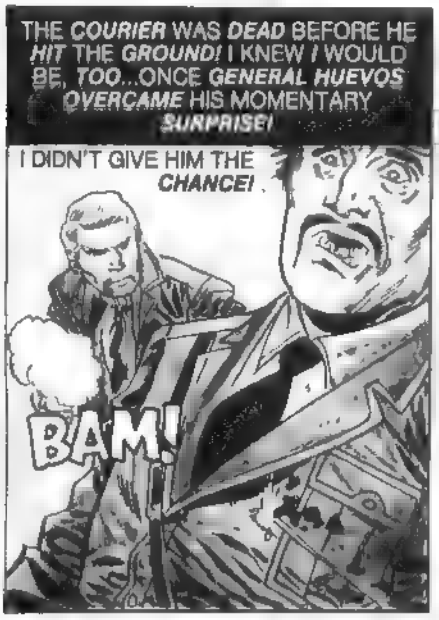
I'M SERIOUS, SKINNER! I'M WITH THE RESISTANCE! THOSE MEN IN THE ALLEY WERE EL SUPREMO'S SECRET POLICE!
THEY WERE TRYING TO ARREST ME UNTIL YOU GOT IN THEIR WAY! THEY WILL KILL YOU IF THEY EVER SEE YOU AGAIN!

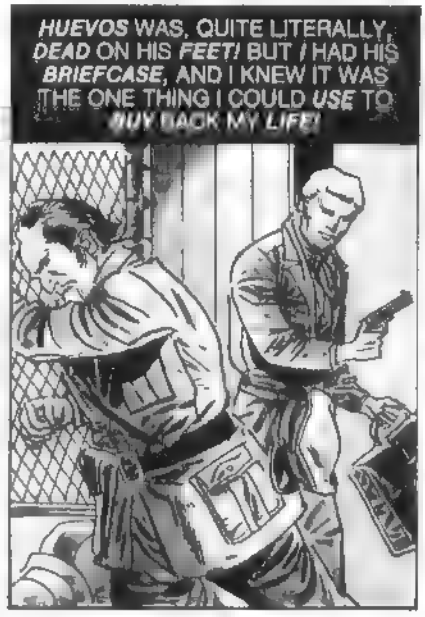
YOUR ONLY HOPE IS TO STAY OUT OF THEIR SIGHT! IF YOU JOIN THE RESISTANCE, WE COULD HELP YOU!
NAW! EL SUPREMO'S THE MAN WITH THE MONEY!

THE NEXT MORNING AT THE AIRPORT, I NEARLY CHOKED ON MY OWN FATEFUL WORDS!
I'M READY TO GO, GENERAL!
EXCELLENT! HERE IS THE COURIER NOW!

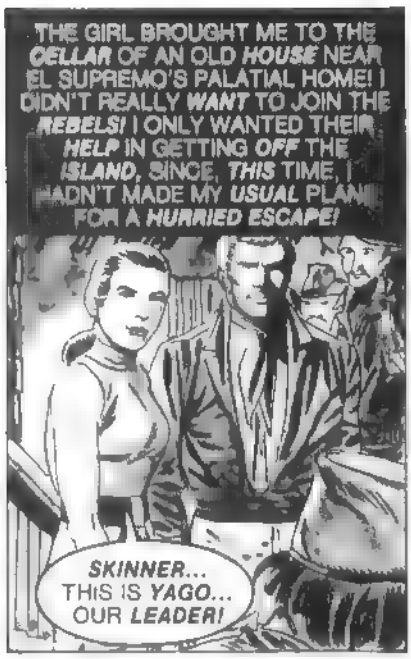
OH GOD! IT'S ONE OF THE GOONS FROM THE ALLEY!
MIO DIOS, MY GENERAL! IT IS ONE OF THE REBEL DOGS!

CLEARLY, THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO BUT KILL THE MAN! IT WAS HIM OR ME...AND I WASN'T READY TO PACK IT IN JUST YET!
BLAM!
BAM!

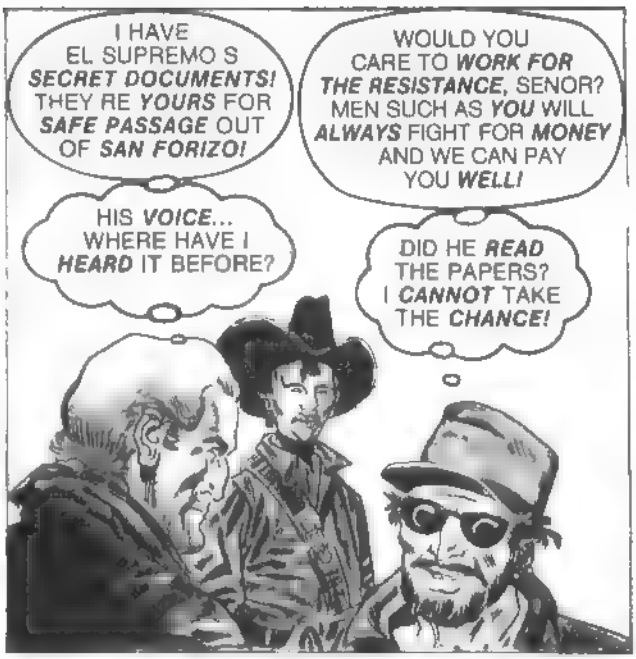

THE COURIER WAS DEAD BEFORE HE HIT THE GROUND! I KNEW I WOULD BE, TOO...ONCE GENERAL HUEVOS OVERCAME HIS MOMENTARY SURPRISE!
I DIDN'T GIVE HIM THE CHANCE!
BAM!

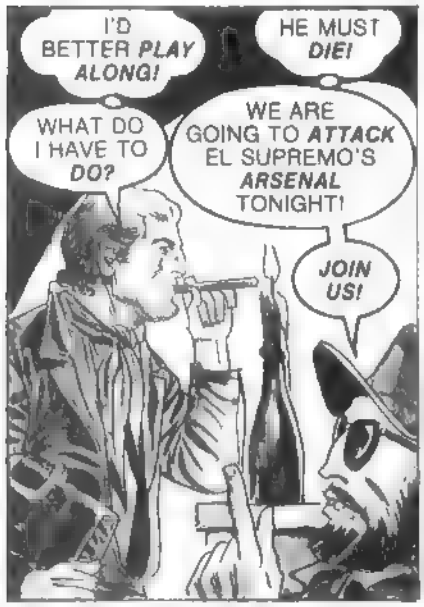

HUEVOS WAS, QUITE LITERALLY, DEAD ON HIS FEET! BUT I HAD HIS BRIEFCASE, AND I KNEW IT WAS THE ONE THING I COULD USE TO BUY BACK MY LIFE!

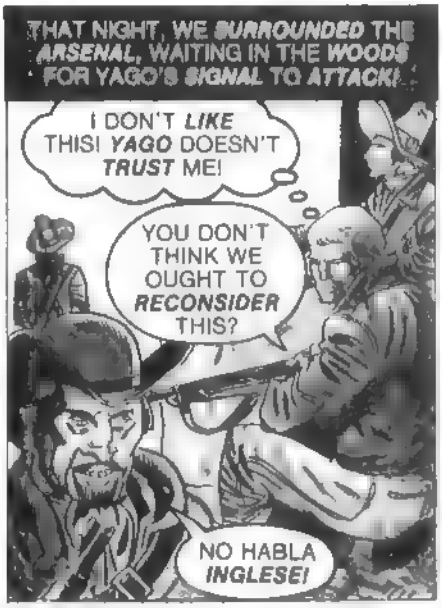
SENOR SKINNER! I DID NOT EXPECT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
BABY.. TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER!

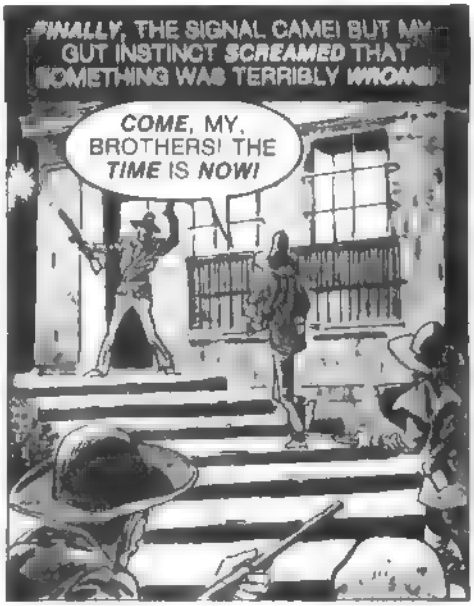

THE GIRL BROUGHT ME TO THE CELLAR OF AN OLD HOUSE NEAR EL SUPREMO'S PALATIAL HOME! I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO JOIN THE REBELS! I ONLY WANTED THEIR HELP IN GETTING OFF THE ISLAND, SINCE, THIS TIME, I HADN'T MADE MY USUAL PLANS FOR A HURRIED ESCAPE!
SKINNER... THIS IS YAGO... OUR LEADER!

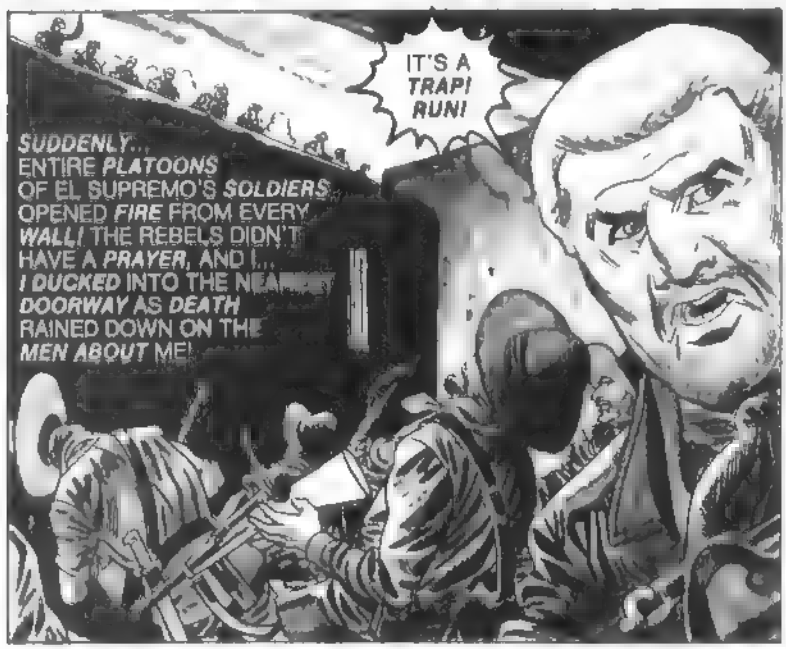
WELCOME, SENOR! I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR US!

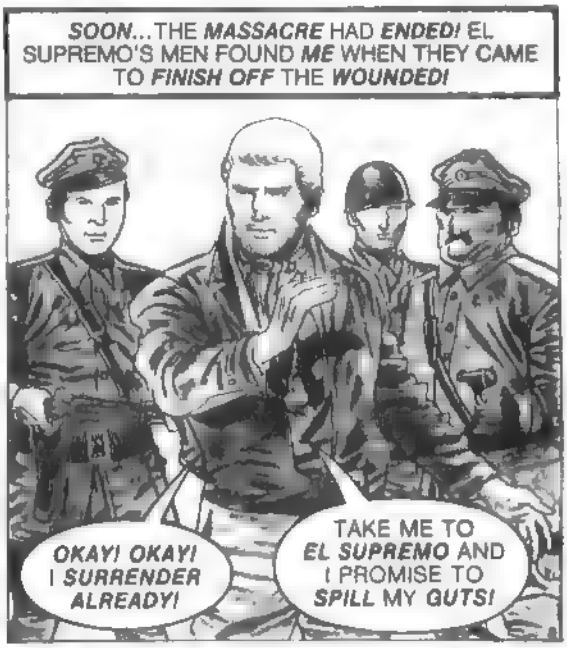

I HAVE EL SUPREMO S SECRET DOCUMENTS! THEY RE YOURS FOR SAFE PASSAGE OUT OF SAN FORIZO!
WOULD YOU CARE TO WORK FOR THE RESISTANCE, SENOR? MEN SUCH AS YOU WILL ALWAYS FIGHT FOR MONEY AND WE CAN PAY YOU WELL!
HIS VOICE... WHERE HAVE I HEARD IT BEFORE?
DID HE READ THE PAPERS? I CANNOT TAKE THE CHANCE!


I'D BETTER PLAY ALONG!
HE MUST DIE!
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?
WE ARE GOING TO ATTACK EL SUPREMO'S ARSENAL TONIGHT!
JOIN US!


THAT NIGHT, WE SURROUNDED THE ARSENAL, WAITING IN THE WOODS FOR YAGO'S SIGNAL TO ATTACK!
I DON'T LIKE THIS! YAGO DOESN'T TRUST ME!
YOU DON'T THINK WE OUGHT TO RECONSIDER THIS?
NO HABLA INGLESE!


FINALLY, THE SIGNAL CAME! BUT MY GUT INSTINCT SCREAMED THAT SOMETHING WAS TERRIBLY WRONG!
COME, MY, BROTHERS! THE TIME IS NOW!

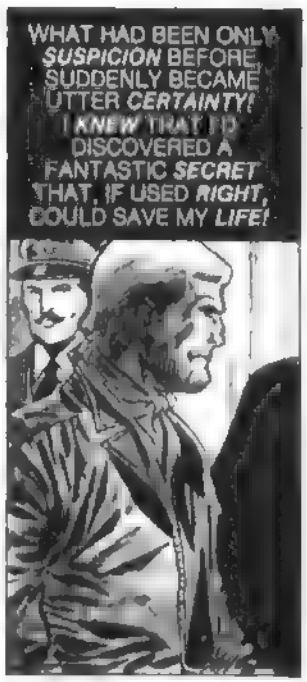

IT'S A TRAP! RUN!
SUDDENLY... ENTIRE PLATOONS OF EL SUPREMO'S SOLDIERS OPENED FIRE FROM EVERY WALL! THE REBELS DIDN'T HAVE A PRAYER, AND I... I DUCKED INTO THE NEARBY DOORWAY AS DEATH RAINED DOWN ON THE MEN ABOUT ME!

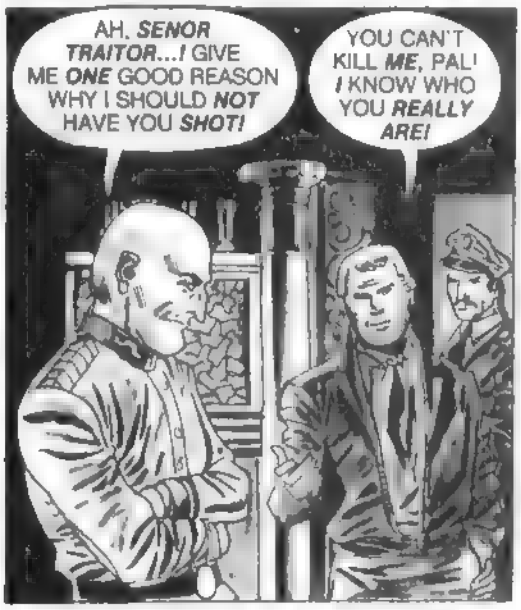

SOON...THE MASSACRE HAD ENDED! EL SUPREMO'S MEN FOUND ME WHEN THEY CAME TO FINISH OFF THE WOUNDED!
OKAY! OKAY! I SURRENDER ALREADY!
TAKE ME TO EL SUPREMO AND I PROMISE TO SPILL MY GUTS!

THEY QUESTIONED ME FOR HOURS ...BUT I DIDN'T TELL THEM ANYTHING THEY DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW!

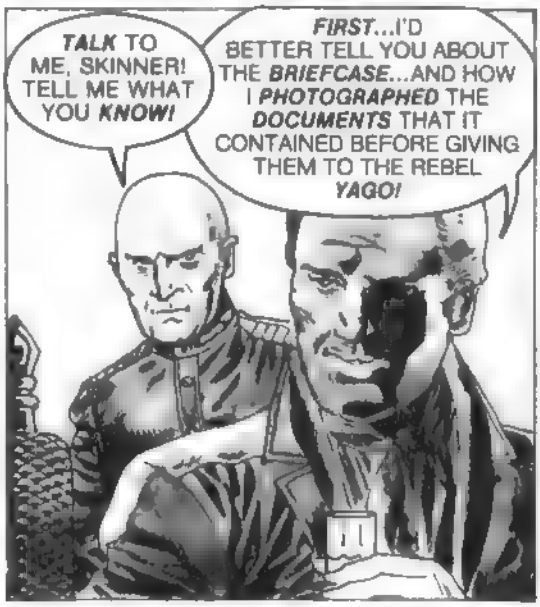
THEN, THEY LOCKED ME IN A DUNGEON...THE KIND OF PLACE YOU SEE ONLY IN BAD MOVIES!
COME, REBEL! EL SUPREMO HIMSELF WISHES TO SEE YOU!

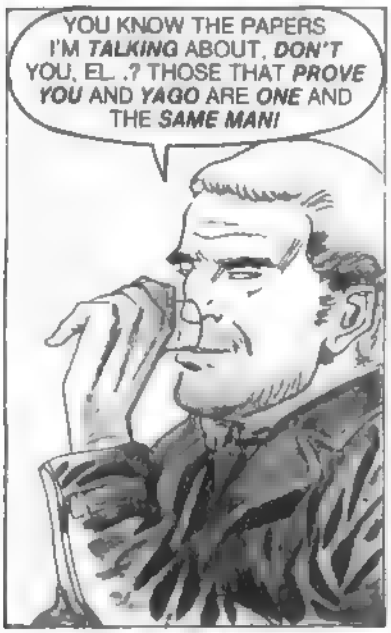
THE BULLYBOYS PUSHED ME...ALL THE WAY TO THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE! I HEARD A FAMILIAR VOICE FROM WITHIN...AND SWITCHES BEGAN TO CLICK IN MY MIND!

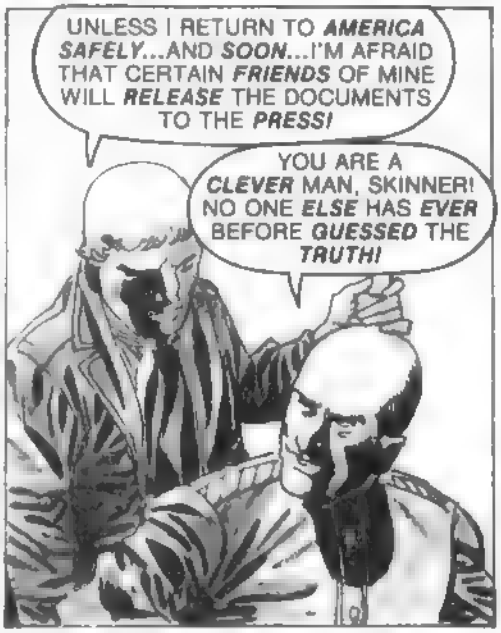

WHAT HAD BEEN ONLY SUSPICION BEFORE SUDDENLY BECAME UTTER CERTAINTY! I KNEW THAT I'D DISCOVERED A FANTASTIC SECRET THAT, IF USED RIGHT, COULD SAVE MY LIFE!

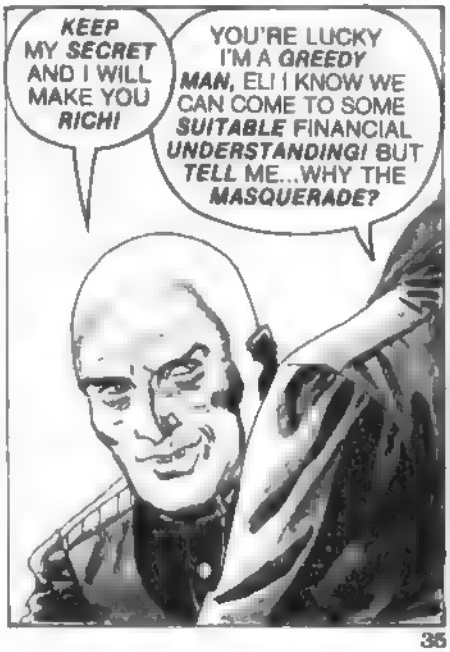

AH, SENOR TRAITOR...! GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON WHY I SHOULD NOT HAVE YOU SHOT!
YOU CAN'T KILL ME, PAL! I KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE!

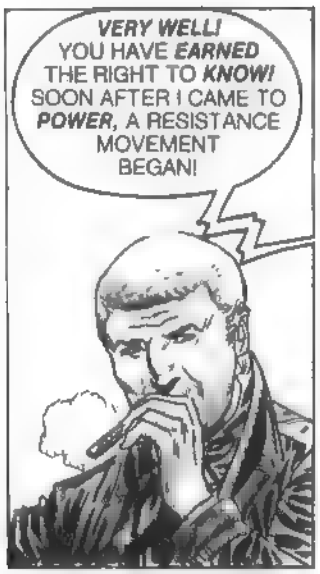
GUARDS! LEAVE US!

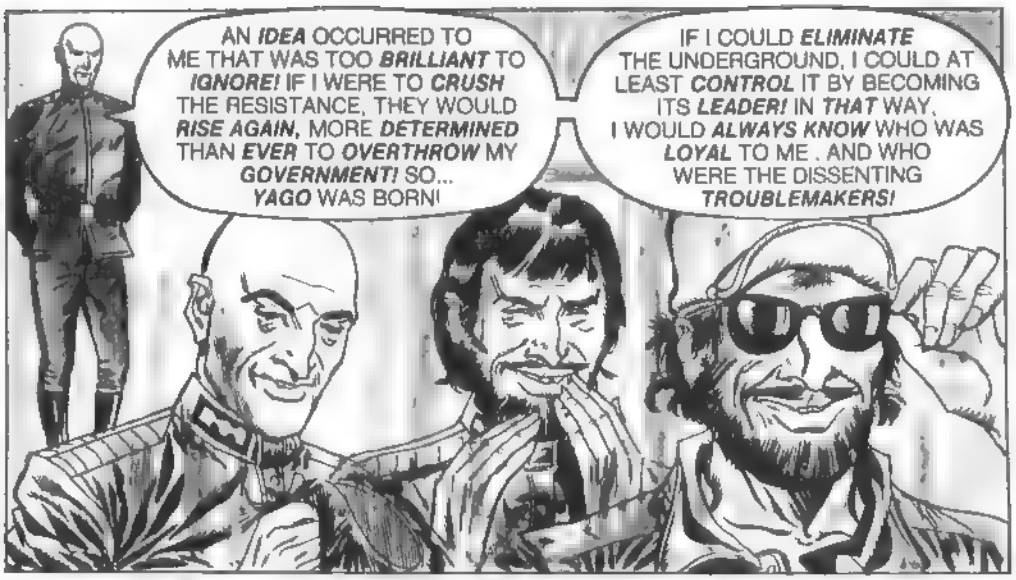

TALK TO ME, SKINNER! TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!
FIRST...I'D BETTER TELL YOU ABOUT THE BRIEFCASE...AND HOW I PHOTOGRAPHED THE DOCUMENTS THAT IT CONTAINED BEFORE GIVING THEM TO THE REBEL YAGO!

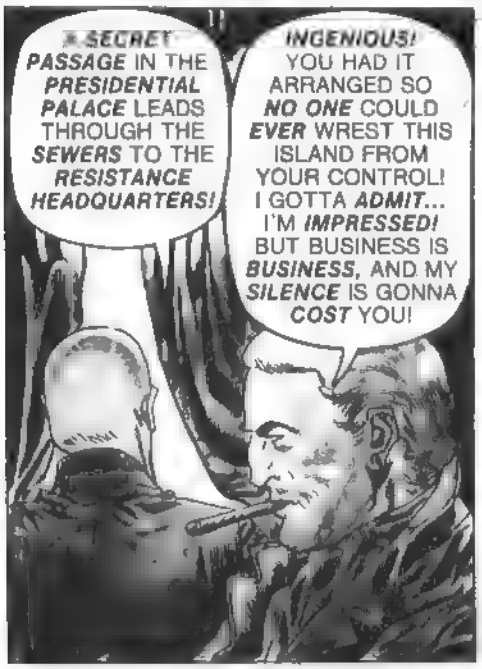

YOU KNOW THE PAPERS I'M TALKING ABOUT, DON'T YOU, EL...? THOSE THAT PROVE YOU AND YAGO ARE ONE AND THE SAME MAN!


UNLESS I RETURN TO AMERICA SAFELY...AND SOON...I'M AFRAID THAT CERTAIN FRIENDS OF MINE WILL RELEASE THE DOCUMENTS TO THE PRESS!
YOU ARE A CLEVER MAN, SKINNER! NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER BEFORE GUESSED THE TRUTH!


KEEP MY SECRET AND I WILL MAKE YOU RICH!
YOU'RE LUCKY I'M A GREEDY MAN, ELI! I KNOW WE CAN COME TO SOME SUITABLE FINANCIAL UNDERSTANDING! BUT TELL ME...WHY THE MASQUERADE?


VERY WELL! YOU HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO KNOW! SOON AFTER I CAME TO POWER, A RESISTANCE MOVEMENT BEGAN!


AN IDEA OCCURRED TO ME THAT WAS TOO BRILLIANT TO IGNORE! IF I WERE TO CRUSH THE RESISTANCE, THEY WOULD RISE AGAIN, MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO OVERTHROW MY GOVERNMENT! SO... YAGO WAS BORN!
IF I COULD ELIMINATE THE UNDERGROUND, I COULD AT LEAST CONTROL IT BY BECOMING ITS LEADER! IN THAT WAY, I WOULD ALWAYS KNOW WHO WAS LOYAL TO ME . AND WHO WERE THE DISSENTING TROUBLEMAKERS!


A SECRET PASSAGE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE LEADS THROUGH THE SEWERS TO THE RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS!
INGENIOUS! YOU HAD IT ARRANGED SO NO ONE COULD EVER WREST THIS ISLAND FROM YOUR CONTROL! I GOTTA ADMIT... I'M IMPRESSED! BUT BUSINESS IS BUSINESS, AND MY SILENCE IS GONNA COST YOU!

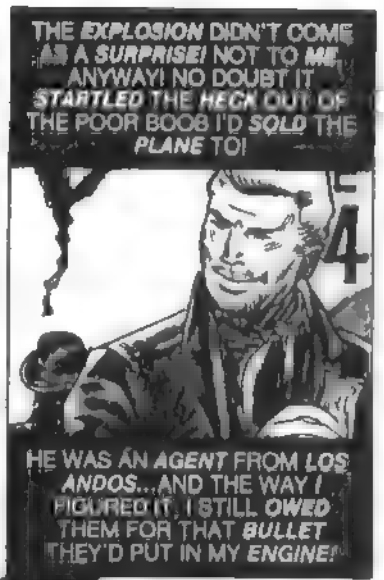
AFTER SOME NEGOTIATING, THE DEAL WAS SETTLED!
NO, FIFTY IS TOO MUCH! THE TREASURY COULD NEVER AFFORD IT! THIRTY THOUSAND IS ALL I CAN DO!
DEAL! AND I FLY OUT OF HERE TONIGHT IN MY OWN PLANE!

DELIVER THE MONEY TO ME AT THE AIRPORT AND I'LL GIVE YOUR MAN THE PHOTOS I TOOK OF YOUR DOCUMENTS!
AGREED! YOU ARE A REMARKABLE FELLOW, SENOR SKINNER!

IT IS A DEFINITE PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH AN HONEST MAN!

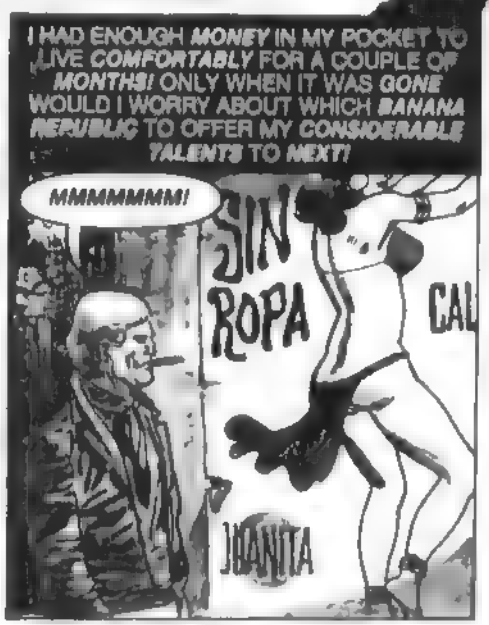
IT WAS MY PLEASURE TO LEAVE SAN FORIZO! AS I HANDED EL SUPREMO'S MAN THE ENVELOPE FULL OF CUT-UP NEWSPAPERS, HE HANDED ME A BUNDLE OF COUNTERFEIT MONEY! STILL... AS MY PLANE WAS READYING FOR TAKEOFF, I CONGRATULATED MYSELF ON THE LITTLE TRANSACTION!
AI

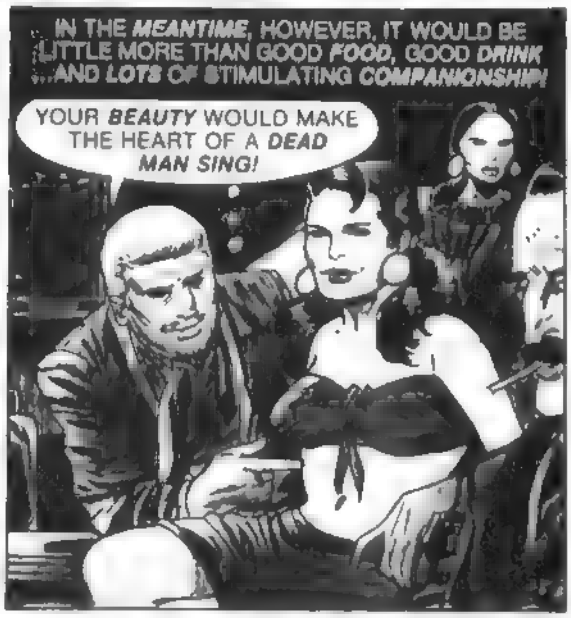
FOR, AFTER ALL... HADN'T I ALREADY MADE A TIDY PROFIT SELLING MY MESSERSCHMITT TO EL SUPREMO'S GOVERNMENT?
WHOOM!

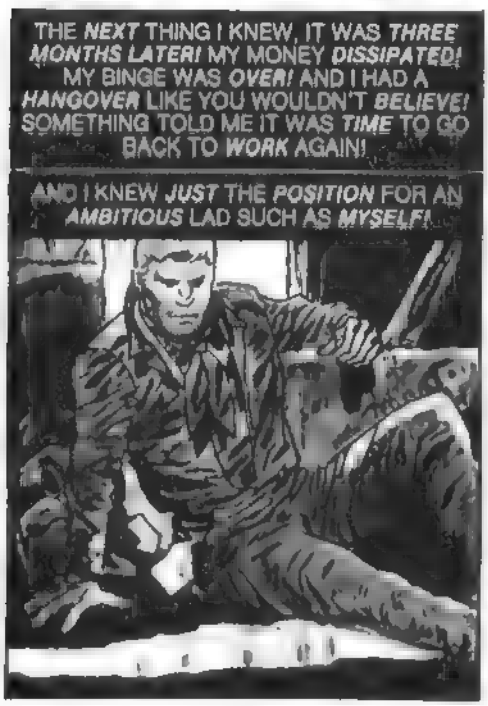

THE EXPLOSION DIDN'T COME AS A SURPRISE! NOT TO ME ANYWAY! NO DOUBT IT STARTLED THE HECK OUT OF THE POOR BOOB I'D SOLD THE PLANE TO!
HE WAS AN AGENT FROM LOS ANDOS...AND THE WAY I FIGURED IT, I STILL OWED THEM FOR THAT BULLET THEY'D PUT IN MY ENGINE!

I SAID GOODBYE TO SAN FORIZO ON THE NEXT COMMERCIAL FLIGHT OUT!

PLEASED WITH MYSELF AND THE WAY THINGS HAD WORKED OUT, I DECIDED TO TAKE A SMALL VACATION!


I HAD ENOUGH MONEY IN MY POCKET TO LIVE COMFORTABLY FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS! ONLY WHEN IT WAS GONE WOULD I WORRY ABOUT WHICH BANANA REPUBLIC TO OFFER MY CONSIDERABLE TALENTS TO NEXT!
MMMMMMM!
SIN ROPA
CAL
JUANITA


IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE LITTLE MORE THAN GOOD FOOD, GOOD DRINK ...AND LOTS OF STIMULATING COMPANIONSHIP!
YOUR BEAUTY WOULD MAKE THE HEART OF A DEAD MAN SING!


THE NEXT THING I KNEW, IT WAS THREE MONTHS LATER! MY MONEY DISSIPATED! MY BINGE WAS OVER! AND I HAD A HANGOVER LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE! SOMETHING TOLD ME IT WAS TIME TO GO BACK TO WORK AGAIN!
AND I KNEW JUST THE POSITION FOR AN AMBITIOUS LAD SUCH AS MYSELF!

SALUDOS!
WELCOME!

SALUDOS!
WELCOME!

SALUDOS!
WELCOME!
end

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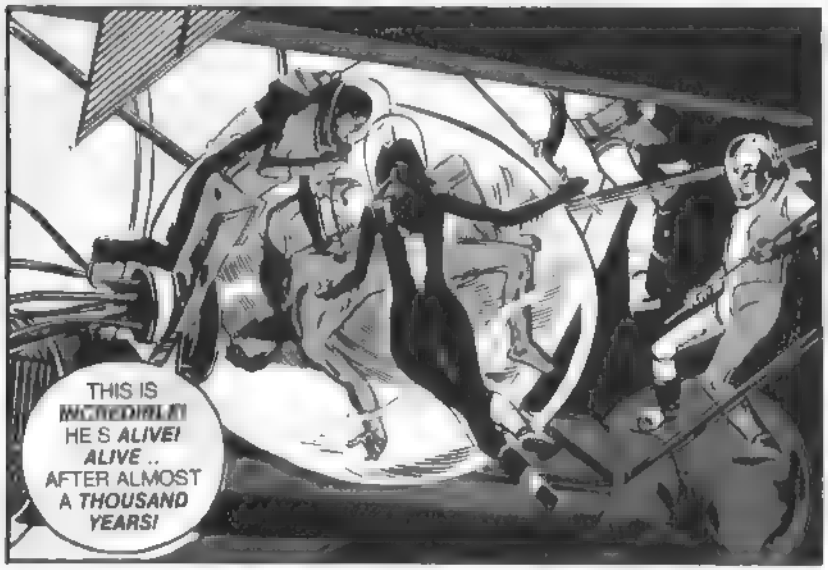
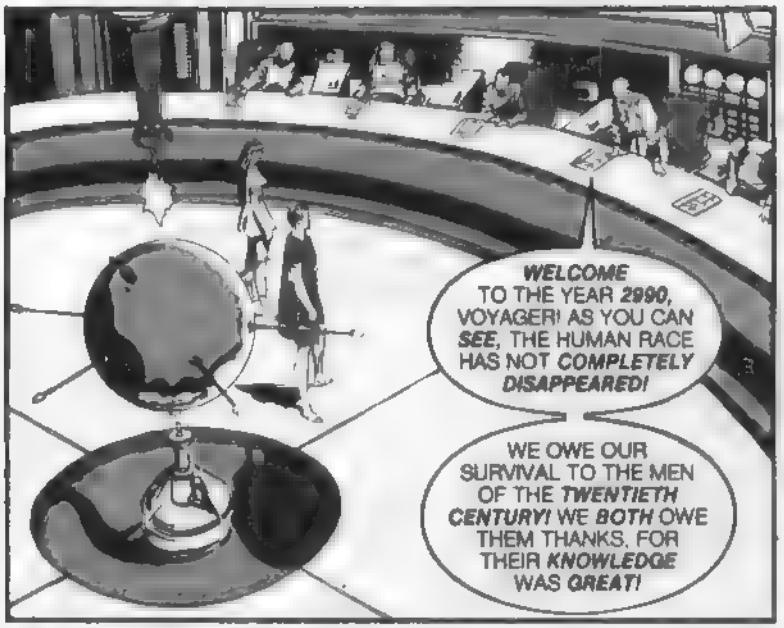
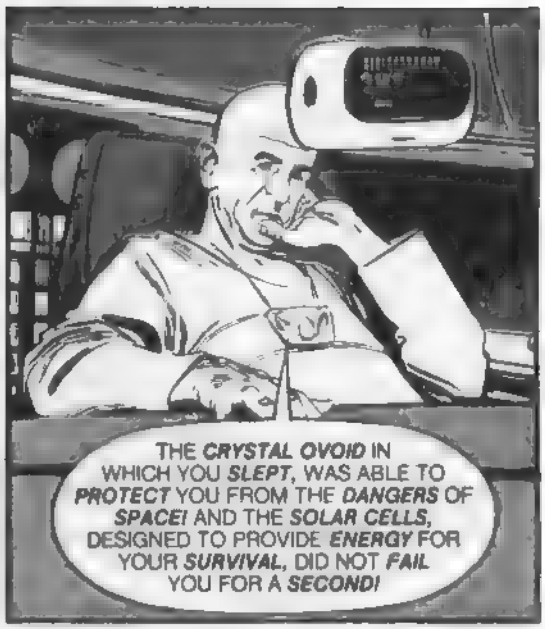
SPACE FORCE SPACEWRECKED!



Author and Illustrator **PAUL GILLON**

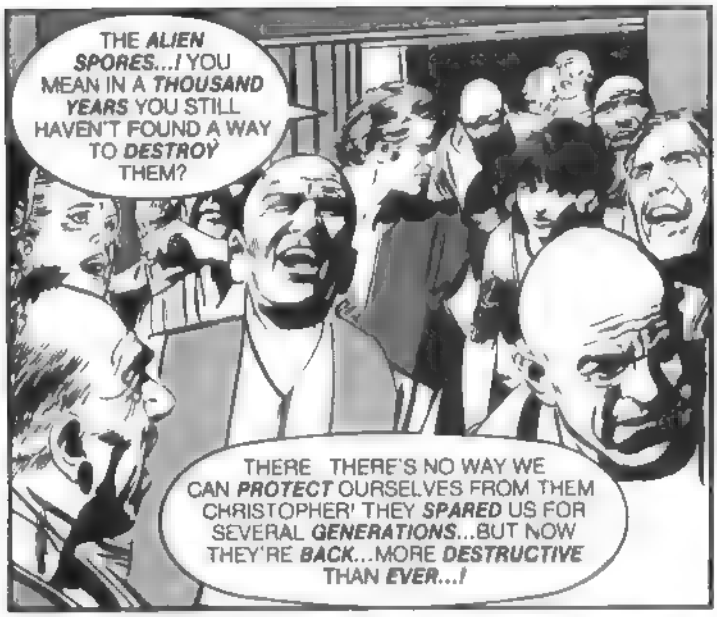

WELCOME TO THE YEAR 2990, VOYAGER! AS YOU CAN SEE, THE HUMAN RACE HAS NOT COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED!
WE OWE OUR SURVIVAL TO THE MEN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY! WE BOTH OWE THEM THANKS, FOR THEIR KNOWLEDGE WAS GREAT!

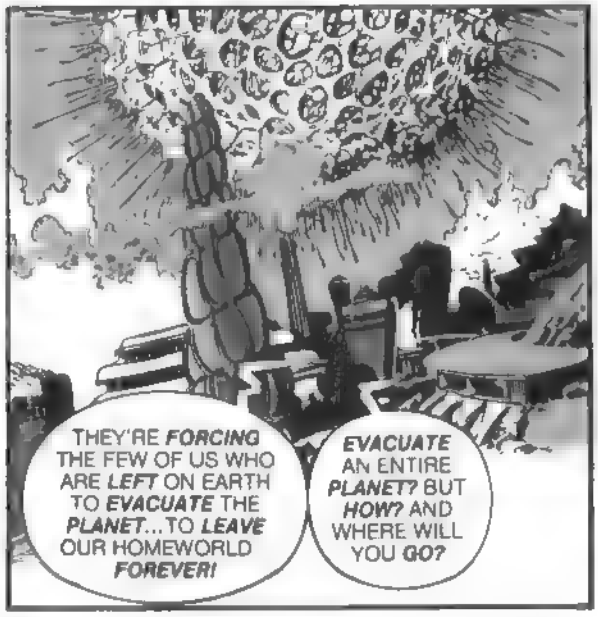

THE CRYSTAL OVOID IN WHICH YOU SLEPT, WAS ABLE TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE DANGERS OF SPACE! AND THE SOLAR CELLS, DESIGNED TO PROVIDE ENERGY FOR YOUR SURVIVAL, DID NOT FAIL YOU FOR A SECOND!

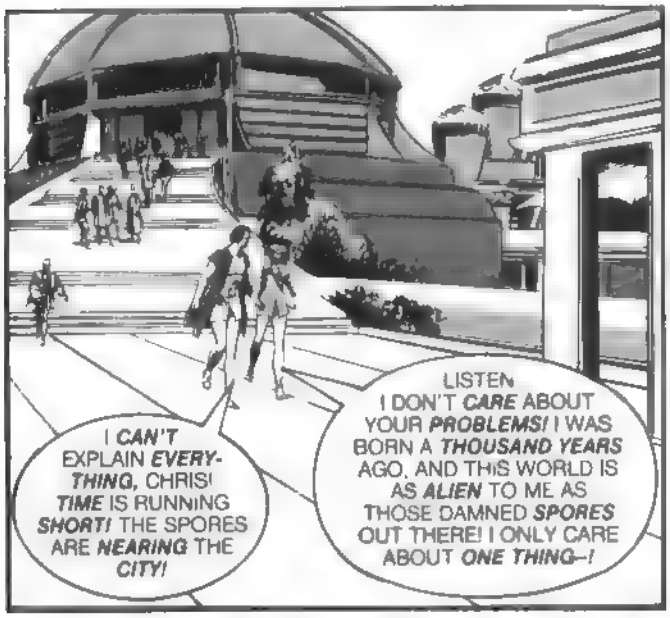
I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A QUESTION! WHY DID YOU WAIT SO LONG TO RECOVER ME? HAS THE ALIEN SCOURGE BEEN OVER-COME?
BUT, MORE IMPORTANT...A YOUNG WOMAN WAS SENT INTO SPACE WITH ME. IN HER OWN CRYSTAL SPHERE! CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT'S BECOME OF HER?

I KNOW THAT THE MAGNETIC FORCE WHICH BOUND HER CAPSULE TO MINE WAS BROKEN...! IF SHE DIDN'T SURVIVE, TELL ME! PLEASE...I'VE GOT TO KNOW!
HEY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM? THEY'RE NOT LISTENING TO ANYTHING I SAY!

IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE WORRIED, CHRISTOPHER! "THE GREAT ALIEN SCOURGE," AS YOUR PEOPLE CALLED IT, HAS COME BACK TO PLAGUE US AGAIN!
AND THAT I'M AFRAID IS WHY YOU'VE BEEN REVIVED!


THE ALIEN SPORES...! YOU MEAN IN A THOUSAND YEARS YOU STILL HAVEN'T FOUND A WAY TO DESTROY THEM?
THERE THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN PROTECT OURSELVES FROM THEM CHRISTOPHER! THEY SPARED US FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS...BUT NOW THEY'RE BACK...MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN EVER...!

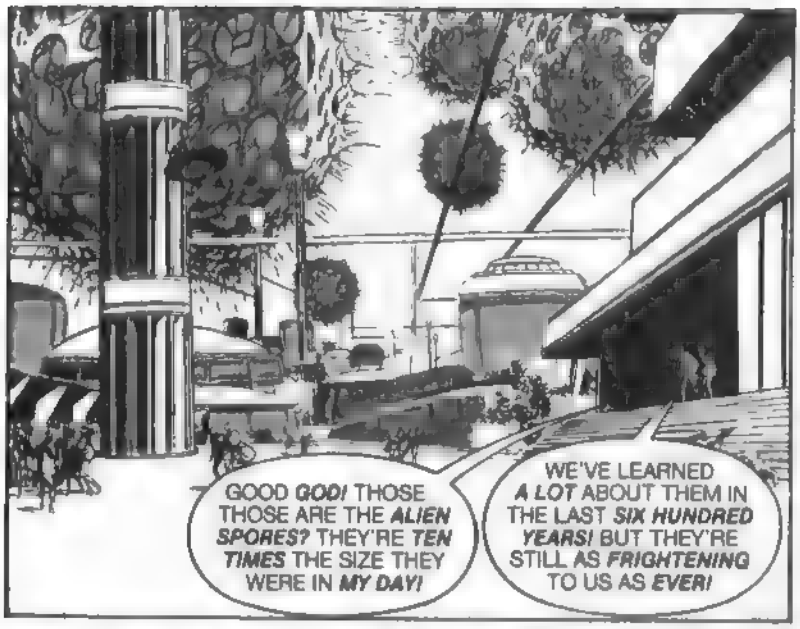

THEY'RE FORCING THE FEW OF US WHO ARE LEFT ON EARTH TO EVACUATE THE PLANET...TO LEAVE OUR HOMEWORLD FOREVER!
EVACUATE AN ENTIRE PLANET? BUT HOW? AND WHERE WILL YOU GO?

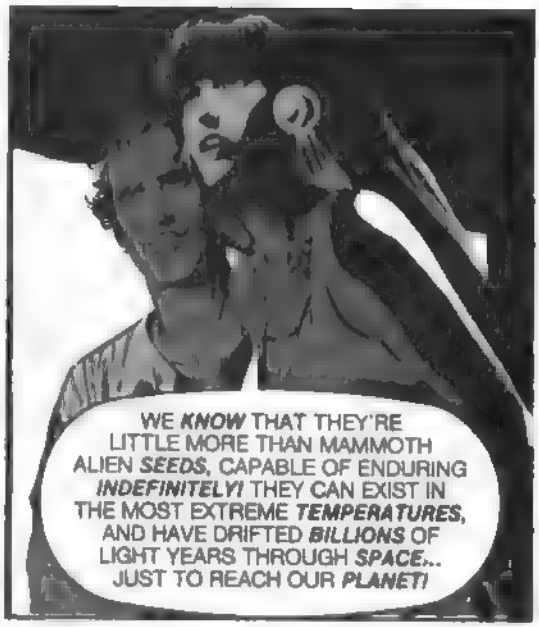

I CAN'T EXPLAIN EVERYTHING, CHRIS! TIME IS RUNNING SHORT! THE SPORES ARE NEARING THE CITY!
LISTEN I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS! I WAS BORN A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND THIS WORLD IS AS ALIEN TO ME AS THOSE DAMNED SPORES OUT THERE! I ONLY CARE ABOUT ONE THING–!

YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE WOMAN WHO ACCOMPANIED YOU INTO SPACE!
BUT THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN TELL YOU ABOUT HER! NONE OF US KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER PERHAPS SHE'S STILL ALIVE, SOMEWHERE IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM BUT WE VE LOST ALL TRACK OF HER!

LISTEN... THE SIRENS!
WHAT DO THEY MEAN?
EEEEE!

THE SPORES... THEY RE ABOUT TO INVADE THE CITY!
OH, CHRIS, WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE REVIVED YOU! THERE'S SO MUCH DEATH HERE! EARTH HAS BECOME A LIVING HELL!


GOOD GOD! THOSE THOSE ARE THE ALIEN SPORES? THEY'RE TEN TIMES THE SIZE THEY WERE IN MY DAY!
WE'VE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THEM IN THE LAST SIX HUNDRED YEARS! BUT THEY'RE STILL AS FRIGHTENING TO US AS EVER!


WE KNOW THAT THEY'RE LITTLE MORE THAN MAMMOTH ALIEN SEEDS, CAPABLE OF ENDURING INDEFINITELY! THEY CAN EXIST IN THE MOST EXTREME TEMPERATURES, AND HAVE DRIFTED BILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS THROUGH SPACE... JUST TO REACH OUR PLANET!

THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE PROVIDES THEM WITH AN ENVIRONMENT FAVORABLE TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT ...WHICH IS WHY THEY ARE SO MUCH LARGER AND HEALTHIER NOW, THAN THEY WERE A THOUSAND YEARS AGO!
BUT WORSE... THERE ARE MILLIONS OF THEM . HOVERING OVER EVERY PORTION OF THE EARTH! AND ONCE THEY'VE REACHED MATURITY, THEY EXPLODE...

..AND THE THOUSANDS OF TINY PODS WITHIN SPREAD THEMSELVES ACROSS THE LAND.. FEEDING ON HUMAN FLESH!
RUN FOR IT, MARA! A SPORE HAS JUST EXPLODED! IT'S SPEWING ITS CARNIVOROUS SEEDS THROUGHOUT THE CITY...!

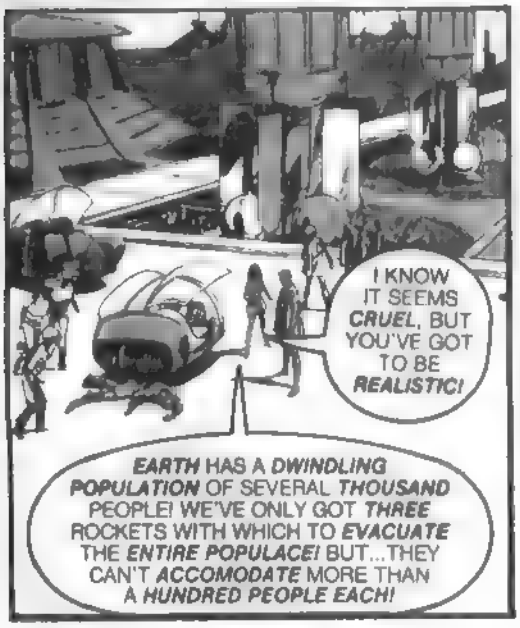
WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE ..TRY TO FIND SHELTER!
THE ASTROPORT... IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE! BUT IT'S MORE THAN A MILE AWAY! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT ON FOOT!

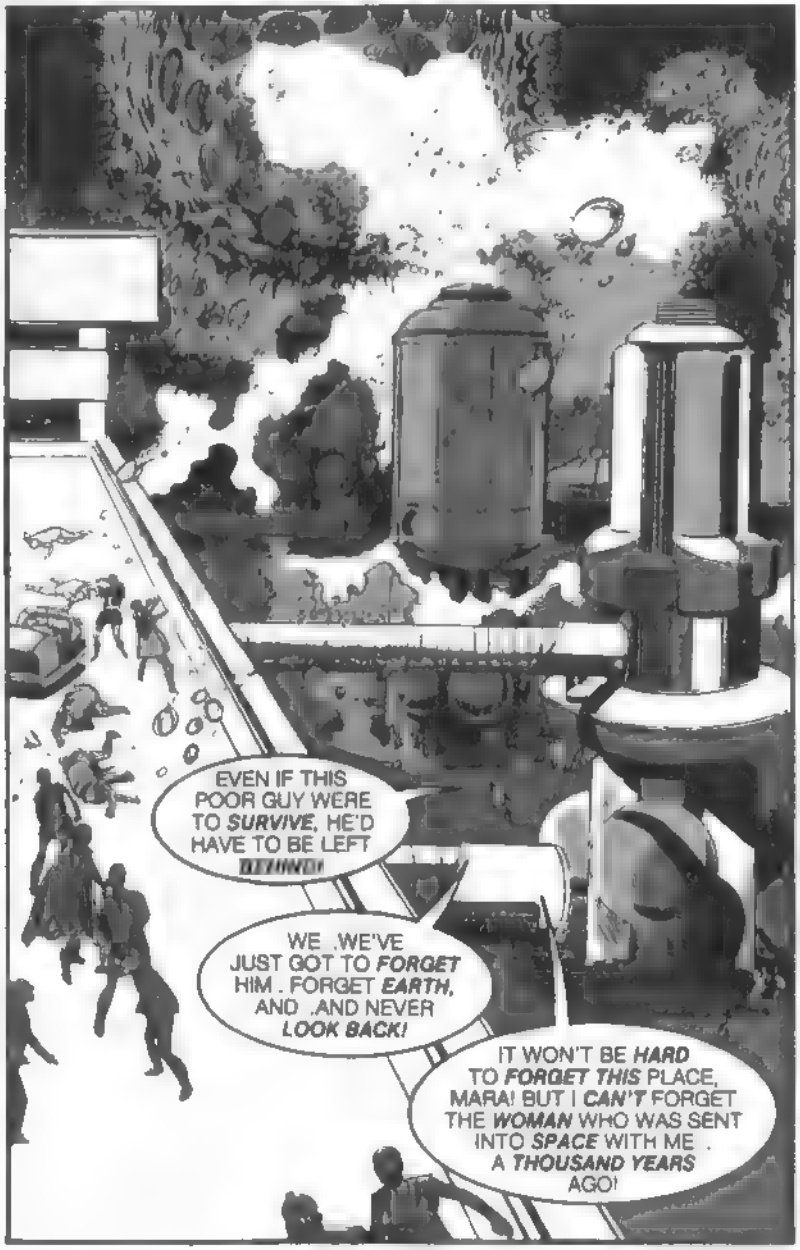
THIS ABANDONED HOVERSLED...! IT'S OLD AND DIFFICULT TO DRIVE, BUT ITS COCKPIT IS AIR-TIGHT! WE'LL BE SAFE INSIDE! HURRY!

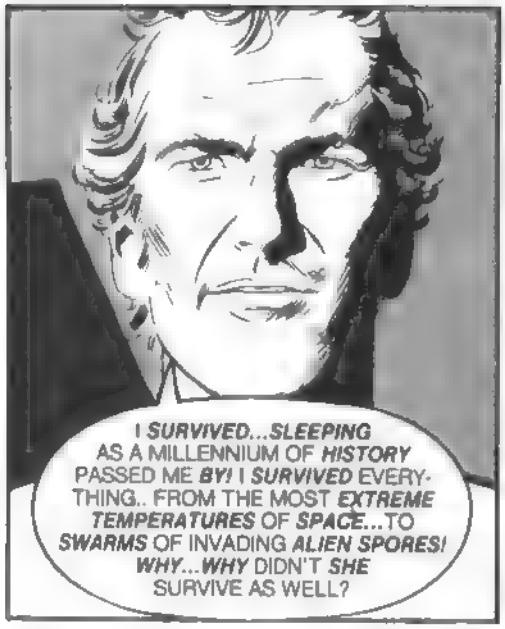
GOD HELP HIM! THAT POOR MAN!
HE HE S BEING EATEN ALIVE BY THE PODS!
DON'T TOUCH HIM! IF HE CONTAMINATES YOU. .YOU LL DIE!
P-PLEASE! I I WANT TO LIVE! DON'T DON'T LEAVE ME!

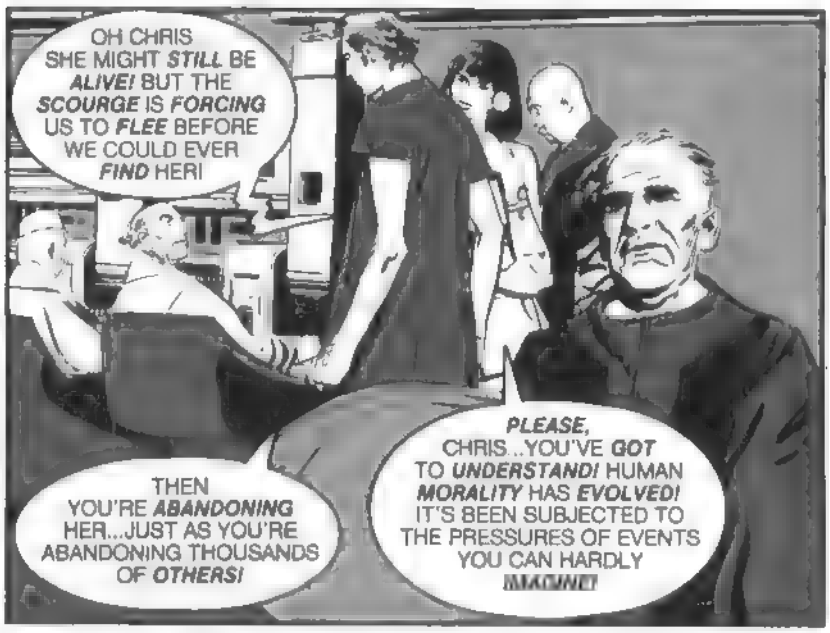
IT'S HORRIBLE, HE'S STUCK TO THE CAR LIKE...LIKE A DEAD INSECT...!
CAN'T WE DO ANYTHING TO HELP HIM?

HE'LL BE TAKEN CARE OF...LIKE EVERYONE WHO IS TOUCHED BY THE SCOURGE! BUT...WE HAVE TO LEAVE HIM FOR THE CLEAN-UP PATROLS!

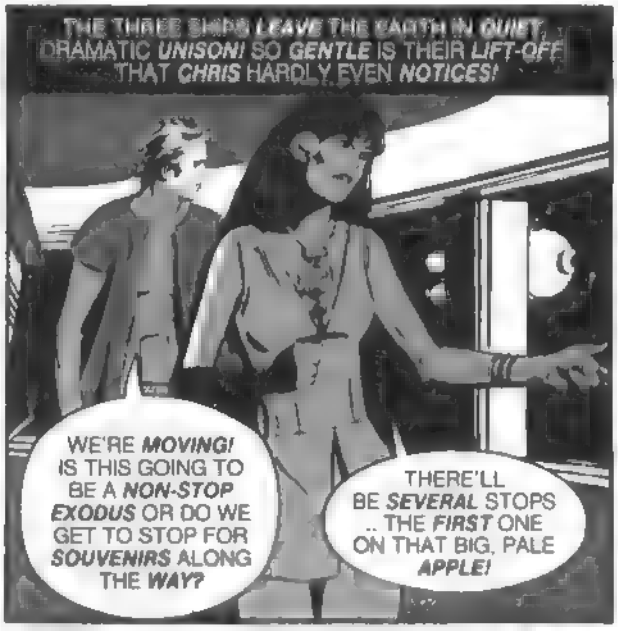

I KNOW IT SEEMS CRUEL, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO BE REALISTIC!
EARTH HAS A DWINDLING POPULATION OF SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE! WE'VE ONLY GOT THREE ROCKETS WITH WHICH TO EVACUATE THE ENTIRE POPULACE! BUT...THEY CAN'T ACCOMODATE MORE THAN A HUNDRED PEOPLE EACH!


EVEN IF THIS POOR GUY WERE TO SURVIVE, HE'D HAVE TO BE LEFT BEHIND!
WE .WE'VE JUST GOT TO FORGET HIM . FORGET EARTH, AND .AND NEVER LOOK BACK!
IT WON'T BE HARD TO FORGET THIS PLACE, MARA! BUT I CAN'T FORGET THE WOMAN WHO WAS SENT INTO SPACE WITH ME . A THOUSAND YEARS AGO!


I SURVIVED...SLEEPING AS A MILLENNIUM OF HISTORY PASSED ME BY! I SURVIVED EVERYTHING.. FROM THE MOST EXTREME TEMPERATURES OF SPACE...TO SWARMS OF INVADING ALIEN SPORES! WHY...WHY DIDN'T SHE SURVIVE AS WELL?


OH CHRIS SHE MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE! BUT THE SCOURGE IS FORCING US TO FLEE BEFORE WE COULD EVER FIND HER!
THEN YOU'RE ABANDONING HER...JUST AS YOU'RE ABANDONING THOUSANDS OF OTHERS!
PLEASE, CHRIS...YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND! HUMAN MORALITY HAS EVOLVED! IT'S BEEN SUBJECTED TO THE PRESSURES OF EVENTS YOU CAN HARDLY IMAGINE!

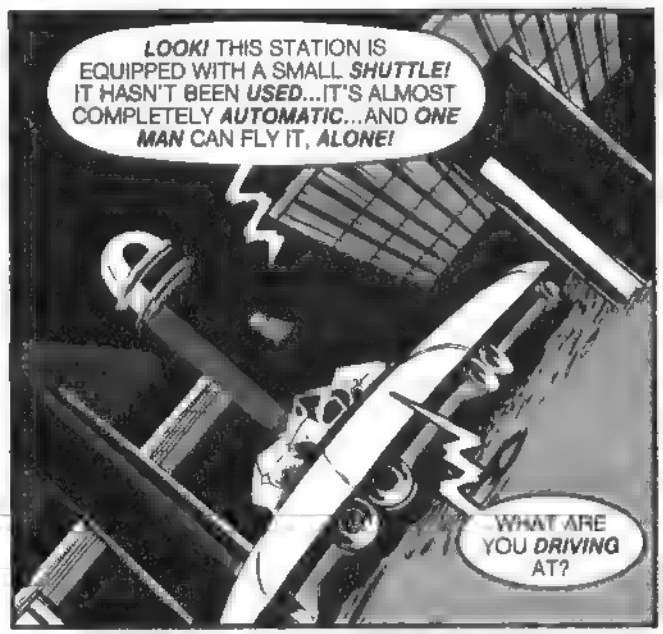
HER NAME WAS VALERIE! WE WERE SELECTED FROM AMONG TEN THOUSAND VOLUNTEERS, AND I HARDLY SPOKE WITH HER FOR MORE THAN HALF AN HOUR!
STILL HERS WAS THE LAST FACE I SAW BEFORE THEY PUT ME UNDER! AND .SHE WAS SO VERY BEAUTIFUL!
I...I THINK I UNDERSTAND, CHRIS!


THE THREE SHIPS LEAVE THE EARTH IN QUIET, DRAMATIC UNISON! SO GENTLE IS THEIR LIFT-OFF THAT CHRIS HARDLY EVEN NOTICES!
WE'RE MOVING! IS THIS GOING TO BE A NON-STOP EXODUS OR DO WE GET TO STOP FOR SOUVENIRS ALONG THE WAY?
THERE'LL BE SEVERAL STOPS .. THE FIRST ONE ON THAT BIG, PALE APPLE!

IT'S AN ASTEROID NEARLY SEVENTY MILES IN DIAMETER! WE'VE AN OBSERVATION POST THERE! THE TECHNICIANS ARE TOO VALUABLE TO LOSE!
IF YOU'D LIKE, YOU CAN COME ALONG ON THE BOARDING PARTY! I'M SURE THE COMMANDER WON'T MIND! MIND!

COMMANDER! IT'S STRANGE. . THEY HAVEN'T ANSWERED OUR RADIO TRANSMISSIONS!
IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, SIR! THE BEACONS AREN'T LIT AND THE WHOLE STATION'S IN DARKNESS!

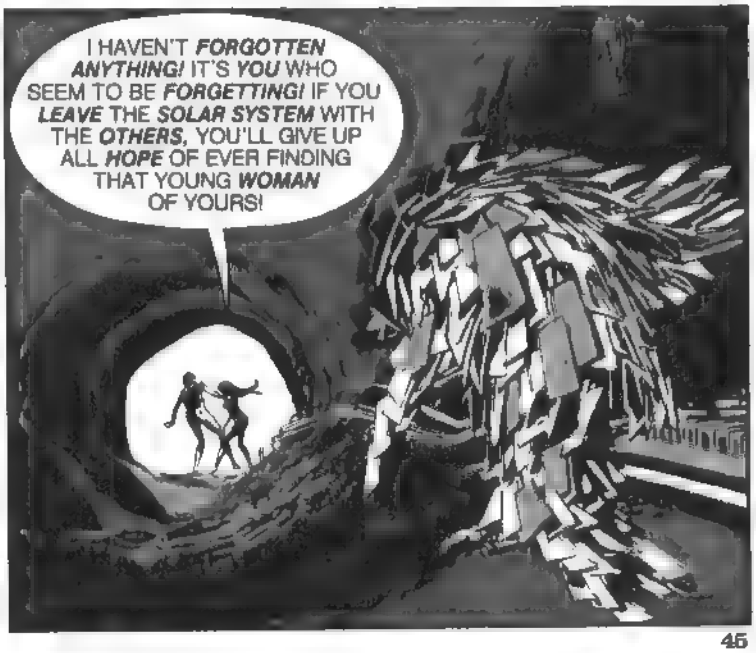
THE STATION'S BEEN ABANDONED, COMMANDER! THEY DIDN'T LEAVE ANY MESSAGES OR ANYTHING!
IT'S AWFULLY STRANGE...BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO INVESTIGATE! WE'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO OUR SHIPS!
CHRIS, FOLLOW ME!
HEY! AREN'T WE GOING BACK WITH THE OTHERS?

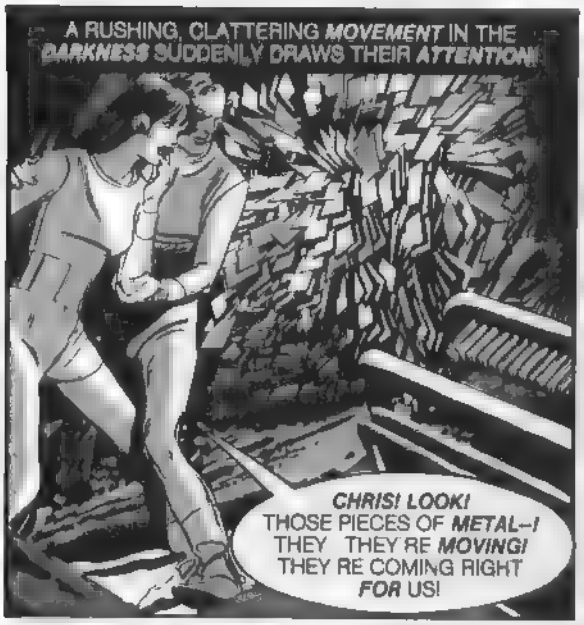

LOOK! THIS STATION IS EQUIPPED WITH A SMALL SHUTTLE! IT HASN'T BEEN USED...IT'S ALMOST COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC...AND ONE MAN CAN FLY IT, ALONE!
...WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT?

I M GOING TO DO SOMETHING FOOLISH, CHRIS!
KISS ME... KISS ME BECAUSE SOMETIMES YOU NEED COURAGE TO BE FOOLISH! I...I'M GOING TO STAY HERE!

THEY'LL LOOK FOR US FOR MAYBE AN HOUR! BUT VERY QUICKLY THEY'LL DECIDE THAT WE ARE NOT AT ALL IRREPLACEABLE!
ONCE THEY'VE LEFT, WE'LL TAKE THE SHUTTLE...IT WILL ALLOW US TO REACH MARS, OR MAYBE ONE OF JUPITER'S LESS HOSTILE SATELLITES!

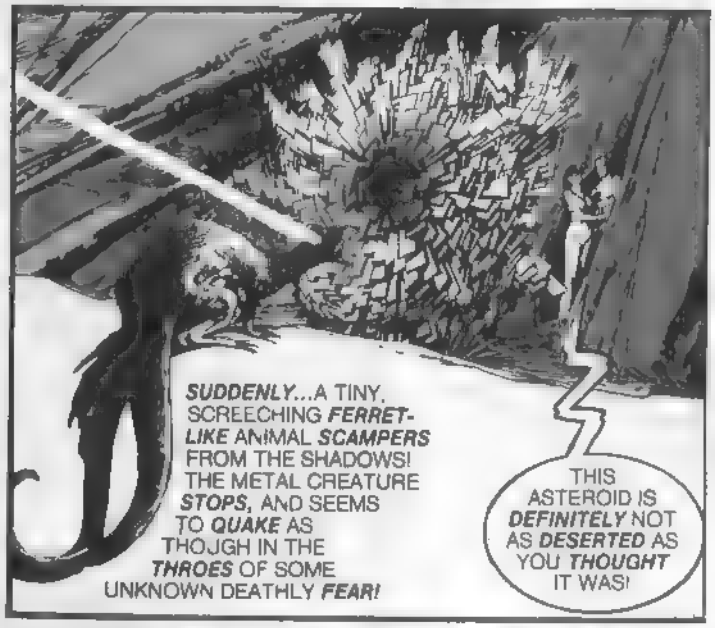
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, MARA? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE SPORES AND THE TREMENDOUS DISTANCES WE'LL HAVE TO COVER JUST TO ESCAPE THEM?


I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ANYTHING! IT'S YOU WHO SEEM TO BE FORGETTING! IF YOU LEAVE THE SOLAR SYSTEM WITH THE OTHERS, YOU'LL GIVE UP ALL HOPE OF EVER FINDING THAT YOUNG WOMAN OF YOURS!

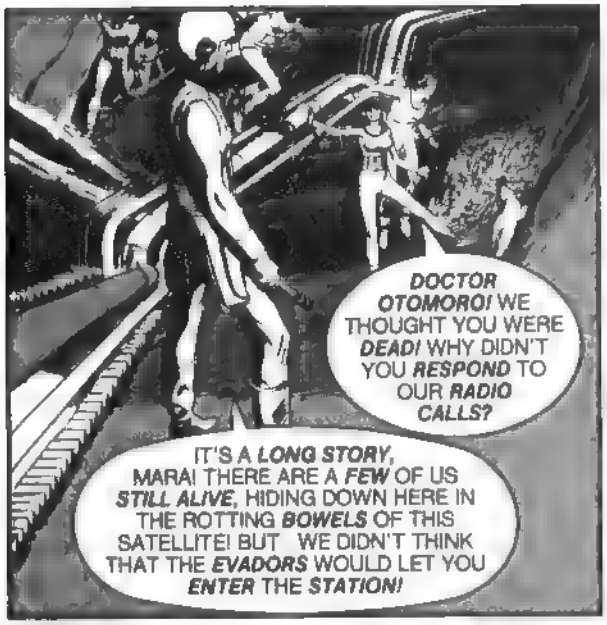

A RUSHING, CLATTERING MOVEMENT IN THE DARKNESS SUDDENLY DRAWS THEIR ATTENTION!
CHRIS! LOOK! THOSE PIECES OF METAL–! THEY THEY RE MOVING! THEY RE COMING RIGHT FOR US!

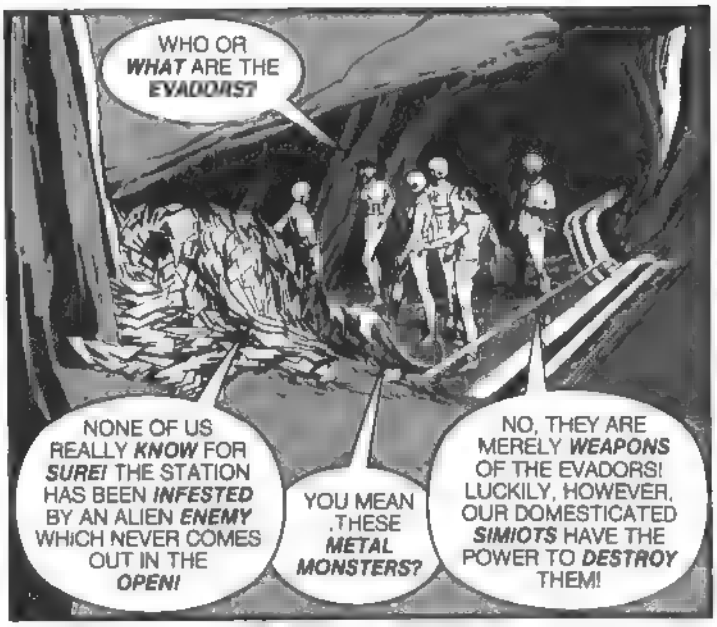
GOD HELP US! YOU...YOU'RE RIGHT, MARA!
IT IT'S SOME KIND OF LIVING METAL MONSTER!

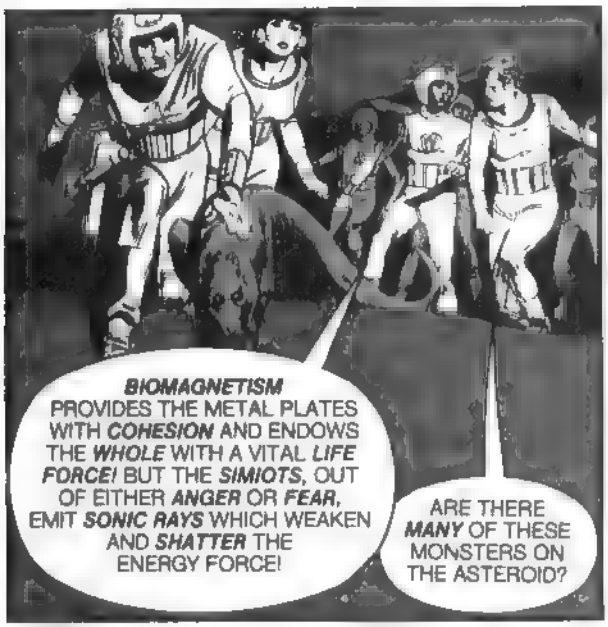
IT'S HORRIBLE, CHRIS! AND AND IT'S GAINING ON US!
WE CAN'T OUTRUN IT ! THOSE BLADES ARE GOING TO CUT US TO PIECES!


SUDDENLY...A TINY, SCREECHING FERRET-LIKE ANIMAL SCAMPERS FROM THE SHADOWS! THE METAL CREATURE STOPS, AND SEEMS TO QUAKE AS THOUGH IN THE THROES OF SOME UNKNOWN DEATHLY FEAR!
THIS ASTEROID IS DEFINITELY NOT AS DESERTED AS YOU THOUGHT IT WAS!

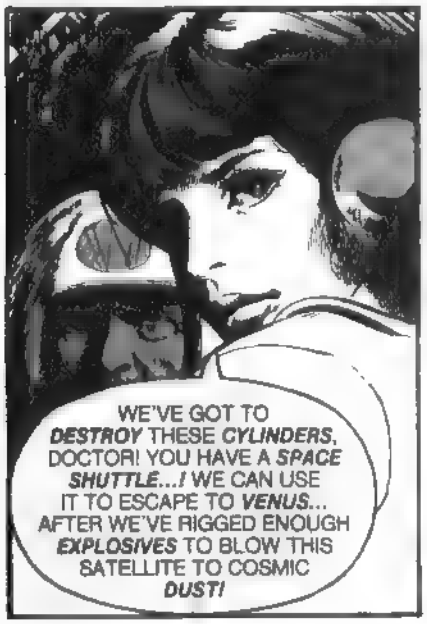
THEN...AS THE RAT-FACED CREATURE HOWLS, THE BLADE MONSTER FLIES IN A THOUSAND NIGHTMARISH DIRECTIONS, LOOSING A METALLIC DEATH-SCREAM THAT COULD HAVE BEEN BORN ONLY IN THE DEPTHS OF HELL!


DOCTOR OTOMORO! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD! WHY DIDN'T YOU RESPOND TO OUR RADIO CALLS?
IT'S A LONG STORY, MARA! THERE ARE A FEW OF US STILL ALIVE, HIDING DOWN HERE IN THE ROTTING BOWELS OF THIS SATELLITE! BUT WE DIDN'T THINK THAT THE EVADORS WOULD LET YOU ENTER THE STATION!


WHO OR WHAT ARE THE EVADORS?
NONE OF US REALLY KNOW FOR SURE! THE STATION HAS BEEN INFESTED BY AN ALIEN ENEMY WHICH NEVER COMES OUT IN THE OPEN!
YOU MEAN THESE METAL MONSTERS?
NO, THEY ARE MERELY WEAPONS OF THE EVADORS! LUCKILY, HOWEVER, OUR DOMESTICATED SIMIOTS HAVE THE POWER TO DESTROY THEM!


BIOMAGNETISM PROVIDES THE METAL PLATES WITH COHESION AND ENDOWS THE WHOLE WITH A VITAL LIFE FORCE! BUT THE SIMIOTS, OUT OF EITHER ANGER OR FEAR, EMIT SONIC RAYS WHICH WEAKEN AND SHATTER THE ENERGY FORCE!
ARE THERE MANY OF THESE MONSTERS ON THE ASTEROID?

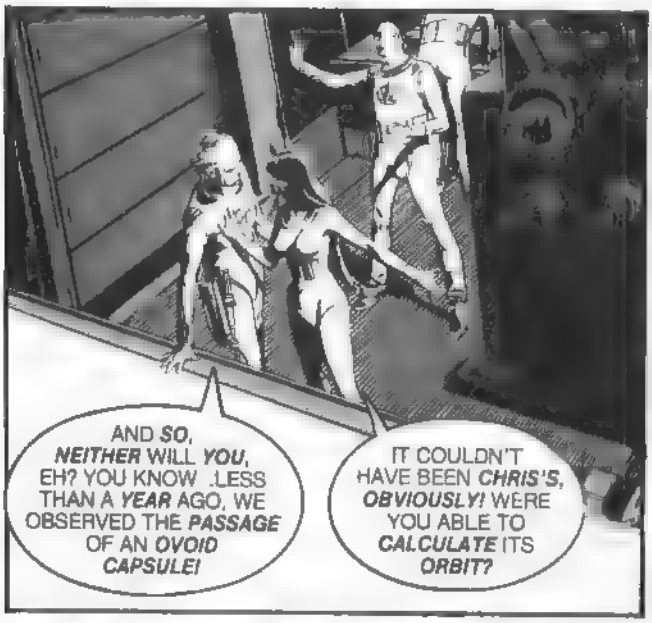
ON THE LOOSE, NO! BUT LOOK AT THESE CYLINDERS! THE EVADORS ARE INCUBATING THOUSADS OF THEM!
WE SUSPECT THAT THEY'RE GOING TO USE THEM TO INVADE THE COLONIZED PLANETS OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM ...VENUS, MARS, AND EARTH!
GOOD LORD! AS THOUGH WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH PROBLEMS WITH THE INVADING SPORES!


WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY THESE CYLINDERS, DOCTOR! YOU HAVE A SPACE SHUTTLE...! WE CAN USE IT TO ESCAPE TO VENUS... AFTER WE'VE RIGGED ENOUGH EXPLOSIVES TO BLOW THIS SATELLITE TO COSMIC DUST!

TAKING COMMAND OF THE SITUATION MARA SUPERVISES THE PLACEMENT OF THE CHARGES AND THE ORDERLY EVACUATION OF THE SURVIVING SATELLITE PERSONNEL!
WITHIN HOURS, THE SHUTTLE LAUNCHES SMOOTHLY FOR VENUS...AS THE SPACE STATION IS VIOLENTLY RIPPED APART!

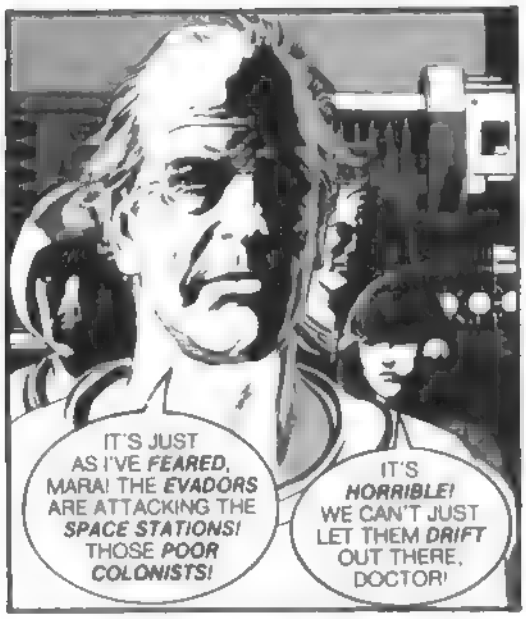
WHY DIDN'T YOU GO WITH THE *OTHERS*, MARA? YOU WERE ONE OF A *PRIVILEGED FEW!* YOU COULD HAVE *REBUILT* YOUR LIFE IN A *PEACEFUL* WORLD . *AWAY* FROM THE *SPORES!*
YOU'RE GOING TO THINK I'M CRAZY, DOCTOR! BUT...I'M IN *LOVE* WITH CHRISTOPHER. . *"THE ONE WHO SLEEPS AMONG THE STARS..."* THE LEGENDARY *SLEEPER* WE ALL *GREW UP* WITH!

HIM? WELL I'LL *BE~!* SO HE'S FINALLY BEEN *RECOVERED!?* I HAD NO *IDEA!* BUT *SURELY* YOU COULD HAVE TAKEN HIM *WITH* YOU!
DO YOU REMEMBER THE *LEGEND?* HE WASN'T *ALONE* OUT THERE! THERE WAS A *WOMAN* WITH HIM! HER *CAPSULE* WAS *LOST...* BUT *CHRIS* IS *CONVINCED* SHE IS STILL *ALIVE*...AND HE WON'T *LEAVE* THE SOLAR SYSTEM UNTIL HE *FINDS* HER!


AND *SO*, *NEITHER* WILL *YOU*, EH? YOU KNOW .LESS THAN A *YEAR* AGO, WE OBSERVED THE *PASSAGE* OF AN *OVOID CAPSULE!*
IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN *CHRIS'S*, *OBVIOUSLY!* WERE YOU ABLE TO *CALCULATE* ITS *ORBIT?*

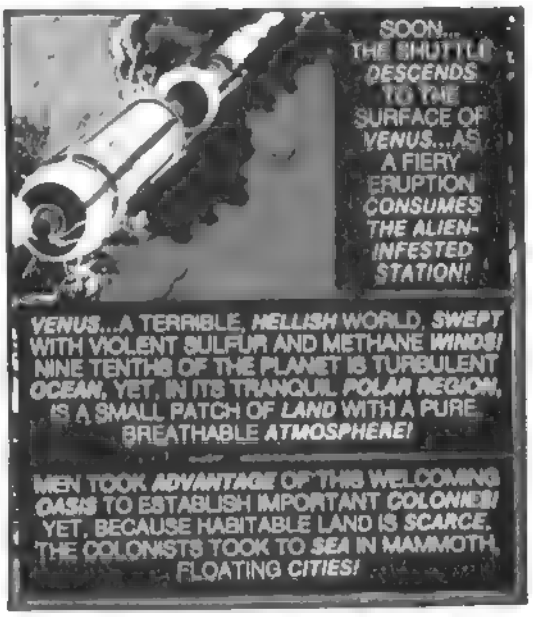
ACCORDING TO OUR THEORIES AT THE *TIME*, IT HAD BEEN *PULLED* FROM ITS ORBIT BY A HUGE *COMET!* IT WAS RE-ROUTING TOWARDS *VENUS*...AND I *THINK* IT LIKELY THAT IT IS IN *ORBIT THERE!*
WE'RE APPROACHING VENUS ORBIT STATION *ALPHA*, DOCTOR! BUT SOMETHING'S *WRONG!* WE'RE PICKING UP STRANGE FLOATING *DEBRIS* ON THE *RADAR!*

THAT'S NOT *DEBRIS*, CORPSMAN! THOSE THOSE ARE *HUMAN BODIES!* THE BODIES OF THE ORBIT STATION *PERSONNEL!*

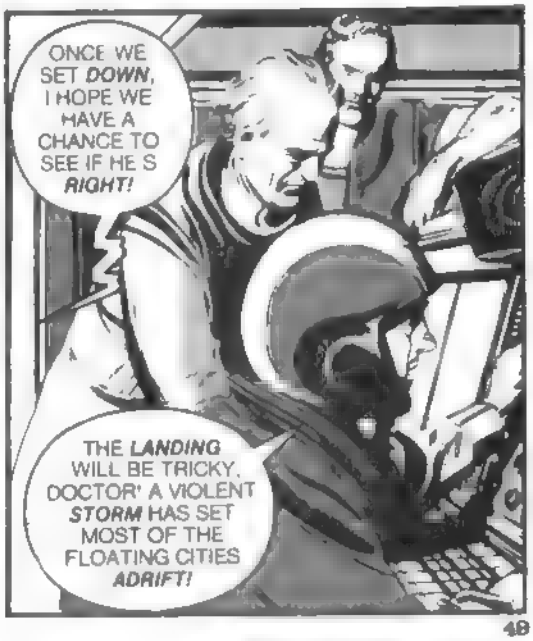

IT'S JUST AS I'VE *FEARED*, MARA! THE *EVADORS* ARE ATTACKING THE *SPACE STATIONS!* THOSE *POOR COLONISTS!*
IT'S *HORRIBLE!* WE CAN'T JUST LET THEM *DRIFT* OUT THERE, DOCTOR!

WE'VE GOT TO *BURY* THEM EVEN IF WE HAVE TO TAKE THEM DOWN TO *VENUS!*
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE'LL *HAVE* TO DO, CHILD! BECAUSE NO DOUBT, THE *EVADORS* AND THEIR *METAL MEN* ARE ABOARD THE *ORBIT STATION! IT* WILL HAVE TO BE *DESTROYED!*

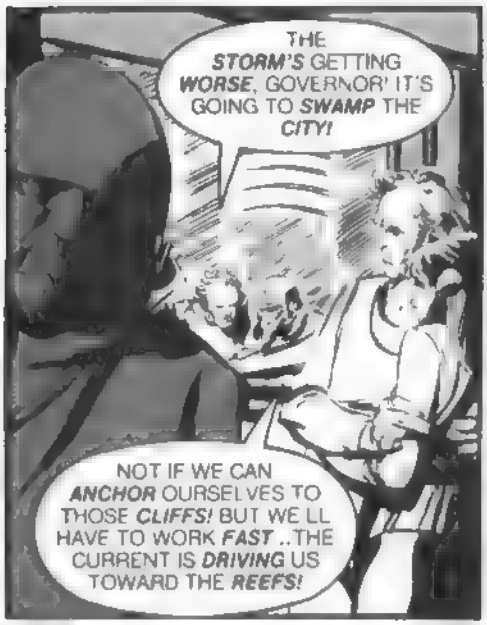
AND THE *OTHER* COLONIES WILL HAVE TO BE *WARNED!*
MY PEOPLE ARE TAKING CARE OF IT *NOW*, MARA! I'VE SENT SEVERAL MEN TO PLACE *EXPLOSIVES* OUTSIDE THE STATION!

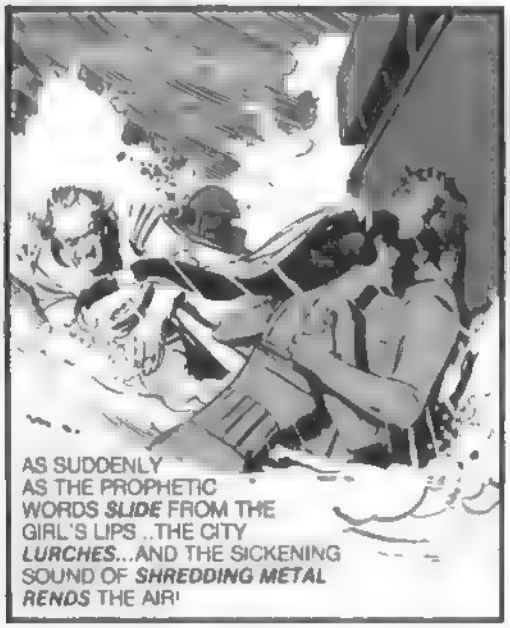

SOON... THE SHUTTLE *DESCENDS* TO THE SURFACE OF *VENUS*...AS A FIERY ERUPTION *CONSUMES THE ALIEN-INFESTED STATION!*
VENUS...A TERRIBLE, *HELLISH* WORLD, *SWEPT* WITH VIOLENT SULFUR AND METHANE *WINDS!* NINE TENTHS OF THE PLANET IS TURBULENT *OCEAN*, YET, IN ITS TRANQUIL *POLAR REGION*, IS A SMALL PATCH OF *LAND* WITH A PURE, BREATHABLE *ATMOSPHERE!*
MEN TOOK *ADVANTAGE* OF THIS WELCOMING *OASIS* TO ESTABLISH IMPORTANT *COLONIES!* YET, BECAUSE HABITABLE LAND IS *SCARCE*, THE COLONISTS TOOK TO *SEA* IN MAMMOTH, FLOATING *CITIES!*

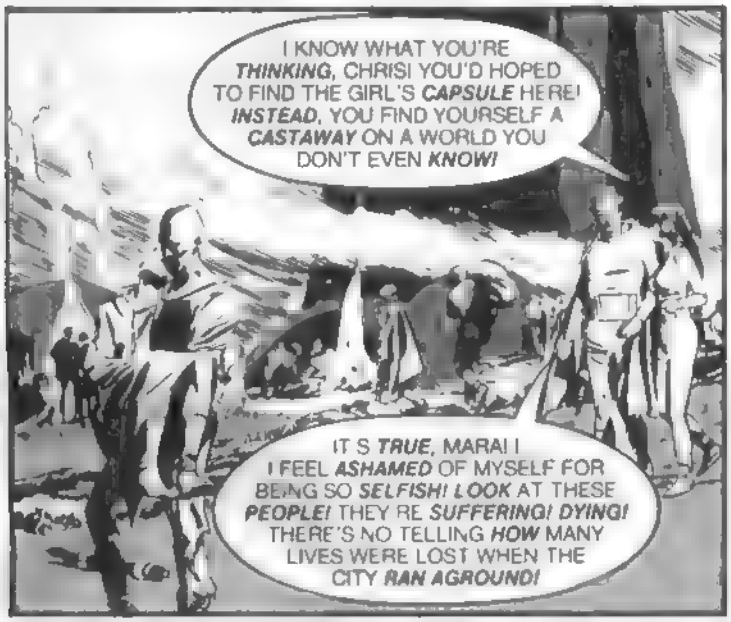
YOU LOOK *TROUBLED*, CHRIS! WHAT ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT *MORE*...THE *DUAL INVASION FORCES* OR *FINDING* YOUR *LOST LOVE?*
LOVER IS *HARDLY* THE *WORD* FOR HER, MARA! BUT SHE *IS* THE ONLY LINK TO MY *OWN TIME!* DR. OTOMORO THINKS THAT HER *CAPSULE* MIGHT HAVE BECOME A *SATELLITE* OF *VENUS!*


ONCE WE SET *DOWN*, I HOPE WE HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE IF HE S *RIGHT!*
THE *LANDING* WILL BE TRICKY, DOCTOR! A VIOLENT *STORM* HAS SET MOST OF THE FLOATING CITIES *ADRIFT!*

THE SHUTTLE *SWOOPS* FROM THE FIERCE UPPER ATMOSPHERE AND IS VIOLENTLY *BUFFETED* BY RAGING *WINDS!* YET, WORSE...*FAR* WORSE, IS THE MAMMOTH FLOATING CITY...*BATTERED* MERCILESSLY BY THE INSANELY *CHURNING WAVES!* SLOWLY, BUT CERTAINLY, THE STORM IS *DRIVING* THE COLONY *OUT* OF THE PLANET'S *HABITABLE ZONE*...INTO THE REGION OF *DEADLY WINDS!*







TO BE CONTINUED!

MONSTER MAKE-UP KITS AND ACCESSORIES

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MASK KIT: A fantastic full head mask of the alien team. Close Encounters! Once assembled from pre-formed parts, you will have a true reproduction made from life-like Flex-O-Skin. It's really as simple as scissors. Fun to wear and absolutely authentic! Order yours now! #[illegible]—$5.95

MAKE-UP MONSTERS: Turn yourself into one of the most horrible monsters imaginable with this incredibly clearly illustrated book! Over 75 photos tells you how to make yourself look like 19 different monsters & all with things found at home or bought cheaply! Order! #[illegible]—$[illegible]

WEREWOLF TEETH: Oversized incisors for tearing out hearts, chewing on evils and other evil things. These werewolf champion fit over your gorgeous teeth! You'll love giving your friends a toothy smile! #[illegible]—$[illegible]

VAMPIRE BLOOD: A few drops of this goo on your skin and you'll be the gorgeous guy around, but please don't scare your mother! Red, sticky and highly suggestive for hours at fun at the darkest dances! #[illegible]—$[illegible]

OGRE'S EYE: Wear this blood oozing eyeball, the same as a monster, over your own eye! You will be able to see through the pupil, so why not buy two and be twice as scary! You'll love glow-in-the-dark too! #[illegible]—$[illegible]

VAMPIRE KIT: All the needs for making his face look hideous. A tube of special vampire blood, evil glow-in-the-dark teeth & two new gory scars! Use a few drops of the blood on the back of the scars & stick on to your skin. In minutes you will transform your face to gore! #[illegible]—$1.[illegible]

WEREWOLF KIT: If you dig the life of a werewolf, then this is the kit for you! It contains 10 black claws, and fangs which fit over your actual teeth, a genuine bat ring & a can of scar-stuff for making a gory werewolf's face! Here's your chance to look like wolf-man! #[illegible]—$1.[illegible]

THRILLING ACTION PACKED GANGSTER MOVIE CLASSICS!

HOW TO SUCCEED AS A GANGSTER

Two of America's greatest actors team up & bring you the consummate of life on "How To Succeed As A Gangster". Everything you ever wanted to know and more — superb acting, dramatic action and a touch of comedy. Bogart and Cagney together in one of their best movies! Terrific film on Regular & Betamax! #[illegible]—$19.95

A MAN CALLED BOGART

A man called Bogart. Who was this mysterious and charismatic actor? He enchantingly starred his way through a dozen popular films usually playing the hard boiled tough guy and only rarely the soft hearted good guy. A must film for all Bogart fanatics shot in superb black & white! Regular & reg. or #[illegible]—$19.95

DILLINGER

This is the story of the man whose name was become public enemy #1! One of Hollywood's greatest and classic crime films in all its horror, fascination and gory excitement that Dillinger moved in on. The big bill bomb robbery, shoot out at a gas house gangster! In color and super 8! #[illegible]—$19.95

AL CAPONE

Rod Steiger portrays master crime lord "Al Capone! The United States establishes as the underworld goes on an orgy of gritty violence, murders and crimes and criminal behavior which opens the way for a power play by the most notorious criminal of them all — Al Capone! A superb B&W movie in reg. & super 8! #[illegible]—$19.95

DETECTIVE STORY

Starring the cool and cunning Kirk Douglas as the cool and calculating detective! Who is this mysterious woman? What is her problem and why does she do so much screaming? Will Kirk fall in love with her? Will he manage to expose the criminal behind all the crime and crime — murder? Superb & gritty! #[illegible]—$19.95

PUBLIC ENEMY

James Cagney is the #1 public enemy to America and Jean Harlow is... well you'll let you figure that out for yourself! This is the all time classic from Hollywood's golden age of gangster movies. Relive the danger, the thrills, the romance of that fabled era in B&W regular & super 8! #[illegible]—$19.95

To order any of these items, please see last page of this magazine for convenient RUSH ORDER FORM.

HAGGARTH

Author and Illustrator: **VICTOR DE LA FUENTE**

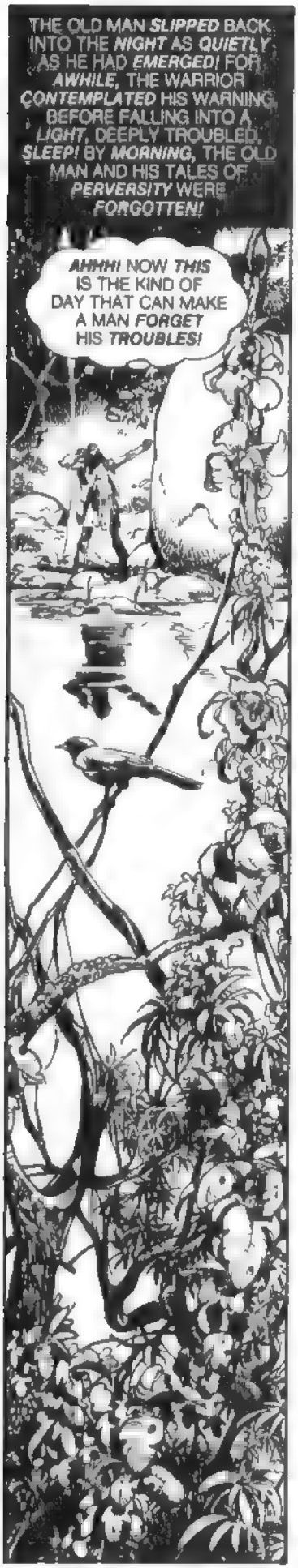
YOU ARE IN THE HEART OF THE SACRED *SHAU FOREST!* IT IS *GUARDED* AND *PROTECTED* BY *DESIRRA* AND HER DEADLY WARRIOR *AMAZONS!* THEY ARE A *LEGION* OF MERCILESS BARBARIAN *WOMEN* WHO FIGHT WITH A *SAVAGERY* RARELY BEFORE *SEEN* BY *MEN!* EVEN THE *FIERCEST* BEASTS IN THE FOREST *COWER* IN THEIR *PRESENCE!*

THEY ARE *ALSO* THE *GUARDIANS* OF THE MUCH COVETED *KANTHAR STONES* ...*PRECIOUS*, MYSTICAL *GEMS* THAT HAVE *ENDOWED* THEM WITH INCREDIBLE ANIMALISTIC STRENGTH!

THE *AMAZONS USE* THEIR POWER TO WAGE *WAR* UPON NEIGHBORING *COMMUNITIES!* THEY SWOOP UPON VILLAGES WHENEVER THE *WHIM* HITS THEM. AND *ABDUCT* THE *STRONGEST*, MOST *DESIRABLE MEN!*
THEY *DRAG* THEIR CAPTIVES TO THEIR HELLISH *ENCAMPMENT* WHERE THEY ARE FORCED INTO *INSANE*, ALMOST NIGHTMARISH *MATING RITUALS!*

THIS ALLOWS THE BARBARIC FEMALE TRIBE TO *PERPETUATE*...WHILE THEIR HELPLESS MALE *CAPTIVES* ARE ALLOWED TO *RETURN* TO THEIR *VILLAGES!*

WHY ARE YOU TELLING *ME* ALL THIS, OLD MAN? SURELY, THERE IS NOTHING *I* CAN DO TO HELP YOU!
I ASK *NOT* FOR YOUR *HELP*...ONLY YOUR *CAUTION!* WALK *CAREFULLY* THROUGH THIS FOREST, MY FRIEND. LEST YOU FIND YOUR *OWN* MANHOOD *ABUSED* IN A MANNER OF WHICH YOU'VE NEVER *DREAMED!*


THE OLD MAN SLIPPED BACK INTO THE NIGHT AS QUIETLY AS HE HAD EMERGED! FOR AWHILE, THE WARRIOR CONTEMPLATED HIS WARNING BEFORE FALLING INTO A LIGHT, DEEPLY TROUBLED, SLEEP! BY MORNING, THE OLD MAN AND HIS TALES OF PERVERSITY WERE FORGOTTEN!
AHHH! NOW THIS IS THE KIND OF DAY THAT CAN MAKE A MAN FORGET HIS TROUBLES!

THE OLD MAN'S NECKLACE...! HE MUST HAVE CREPT BACK HERE AFTER I WAS ASLEEP, AND LEFT IT!

THE OLD SCOUNDREL! HE'S GOT THE STEALTH OF A FOX! HE DOESN'T WANT ME TO FORGET HIS WARNING!

HE DOESN'T WANT ME TO THINK THAT IT WAS ALL A DREAM!

I DON'T KNOW IF HIS TALE OF SAVAGE AMAZONS IS TRUE OR NOT! I DO KNOW THAT I'LL BE GLAD TO LEAVE THIS FOREST BEHIND ME!

THE WARRIOR TRAVELED SOUTHWARD THROUGH THE DENSE UNDERBRUSH FOR SEVERAL HOURS, WHEN SUDDENLY, THE STILLNESS WAS BROKEN BY BIRDS BEING FLUSHED INTO THE OPEN!
THOSE EGRETS...! SOMETHING S FRIGHTENED THEM!

IT SOUNDS LIKE SOME KIND OF WOUNDED ANIMAL. .CHARGING THROUGH THE JUNGLE! IT S COMING FROM OVER HERE!

BY THE GODS! IT'S A MAN... COMING FOR ME!

IF IT'S A FIGHT HE WANTS EH?

P-PLEASE NO! D-DON T K-KILL ME! I NEED HELP!
YOU RE HURT!

WORKING *SWIFTLY*, THE QUICK-THINKING WARRIOR *TENDED* THE INJURED MAN'S *WOUND*...HURRIEDLY BUILDING A *FIRE*, AND *CAUTERIZING* THE BLOODY *HOLE* THAT HAD BEEN MERCILESSLY *CARVED* INTO HIS *STOMACH!*

POOR FELLOW! HE'S *UNCONSCIOUS!* I'VE *DONE* EVERYTHING I *CAN* TO *STOP* THE *BLEEDING*... BUT SOMETHING *STILL* HAS TO BE DONE TO PREVENT *INFECTION!*

YOU WANT TO *TELL* ME HOW IT *HAPPENED?*

D-DESIRRA...! THE *AMAZON QUEEN!* SHE *FOUND* ME WITH WITH THE *KANTHER STONES!* I'VE LEARNED WHERE SHE *MINES* THEM AND AND I JUST WANTED A *FEW*, TO HELP MY PEOPLE BECOME AS *POWERFUL* AS HER *AMAZONS!*

THIS *DESSIRA* KNEW WHAT SHE WAS *DOING!* SHE *KNEW* YOUR WOUND WOULDN'T *KILL* YOU *OUTRIGHT*...BUT WOULD MAKE YOU *BLEED* TO DEATH BEFORE YOU EVER MADE IT BACK TO YOUR *VILLAGE!*

THAT WAY, IF ANYONE EVER *FOUND* YOUR *BODY*, IT WOULD BE NOWHERE *NEAR* HER PRECIOUS *KANTHER MINES!*

CLEVER!

YOU CAN'T *AFFORD* TO LOSE ANY MORE *BLOOD!* BUT THIS *RAFT* WILL FLOAT YOU COMFORTABLY DOWN RIVER TO YOUR *VILLAGE!*

THE *CURRENT* CAN BE *TREACHEROUS* IN PLACES! BUT I'LL *GUIDE* YOU FROM THE *BANK!* IT'LL BE *SLOW GOING*...BUT AT LEAST

IT'LL BE *SAFE!*

DAMN *ROCKS!* THEY RE MAKING IT *MORE DIFFICULT* THAN I [illegible]!!

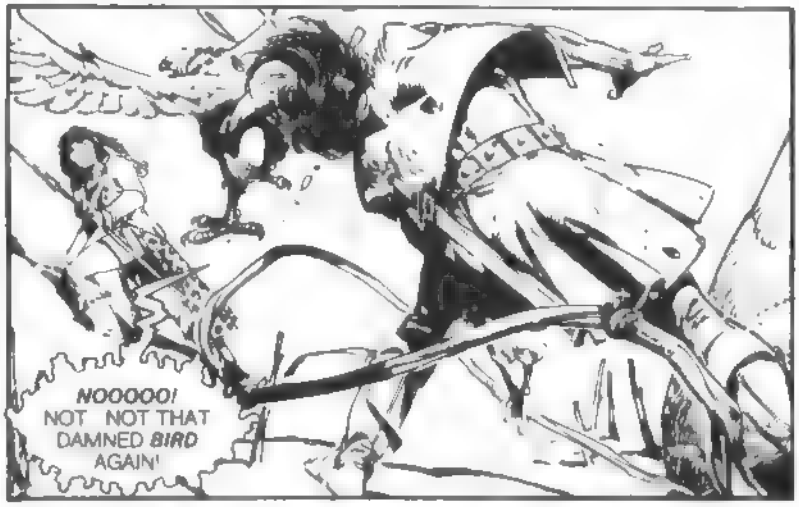
OH *NO* ! NOT *AGAIN!*
IT'S THE SAME *AMAZON* GIRL WHO TRIED TO *KILL* ME WHEN I FIRST CAME *INTO* THIS DAMNED FOREST !*
* SEE LAST ISSUE

NO YOU DON T!

KRAAK!
NOT *THIS* TIME, WOMAN!

YOU'VE JUMPED ME ONCE TOO OFTEN, YOU LITTLE TIGRESS! I'M GETTING SICK AND TIRED OF IT!

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO TEACH YOU A LESSON IN MANNERS!
GOOR! GOOR... COME ..! KILL!


NOOOOO! NOT NOT THAT DAMNED BIRD AGAIN!

OH NO! HE S MADE ME DROP THE LINE! I VE GOT TO GET IT BACK BEFORE THE RAFT ENDS UP ON THOSE ROCKS!

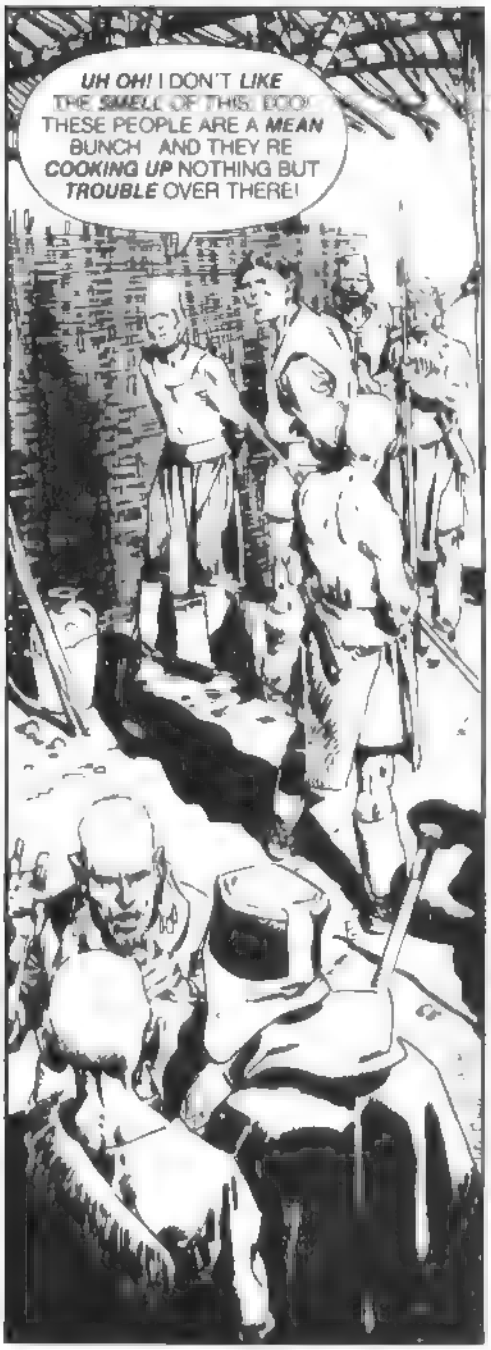
ELSEWHERE IN THE FOREST OF THE AMAZONS, TWO MEN GUIDED A SILENT CANOE GENTLY TOWARD A SLUMBERING RIVER VILLAGE!
LOOK THERE, ECO! A SETTLEMENT! SEEMS PEACEFUL ENOUGH! MAYBE WE CAN FIND FOOD AND LODGING FOR THE NIGHT!

HELLO, MY FRIENDS! CAN YOU SPARE A BED AND A PLATE OF GRUEL FOR TWO WAYFARING AND WEARY TRAVELLERS?

WHY IS EVERYONE SO QUIET? YOU ACT LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO A FUNERAL!

H-HEY! W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

A FUNERAL, IS IT? A FUNERAL YOU'LL BE HAVIN' WHEN WE CUT OUT YOUR MURDEROUS HEARTS!


UH OH! I DON'T LIKE THE SMELL OF THIS, ECO! THESE PEOPLE ARE A MEAN BUNCH AND THEY RE COOKING UP NOTHING BUT TROUBLE OVER THERE!

HERE THEY COME, BUDDY! GET READY FOR THE WORST!

GENTLEMEN, THIS VILLAGE HAS HAD ITS SHARE OF PROBLEMS! AND, TO SURVIVE, WE'VE HAD TO LEARN TO ACCEPT THEM ALL! WE WILL NOT, HOWEVER ACCEPT A PAIR OF THIEVES AND MURDERERS INTO OUR MIDST!
I'M AFRAID WE RE GOING TO HAVE TO TERMINATE YOU!
ER SIRE! WE HAVE OUR SHARE OF PROBLEMS AS WELL! BUT WE RE NOT THIEVES OR MURDERERS!

LIAR! THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD HAVE COME INTO POSSESSION OF THAT CANOE IS BY MURDERING THE MEN IT BELONGED TO!

NO! WAIT! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
THOSE MEN WERE ALREADY DEAD WHEN WE TOOK THE CANOE!
BUT WE DIDN T KILL THEM! I SWEAR!

BAH! HANGING WILL BE TOO GOOD FOR THE LIKES OF LIARS SUCH AS YOU!
BY ALL THE GODS! PLEASE! BEFORE YOU CONDEMN US, AT LEAST MAKE CERTAIN THAT WE'RE GUILTY!

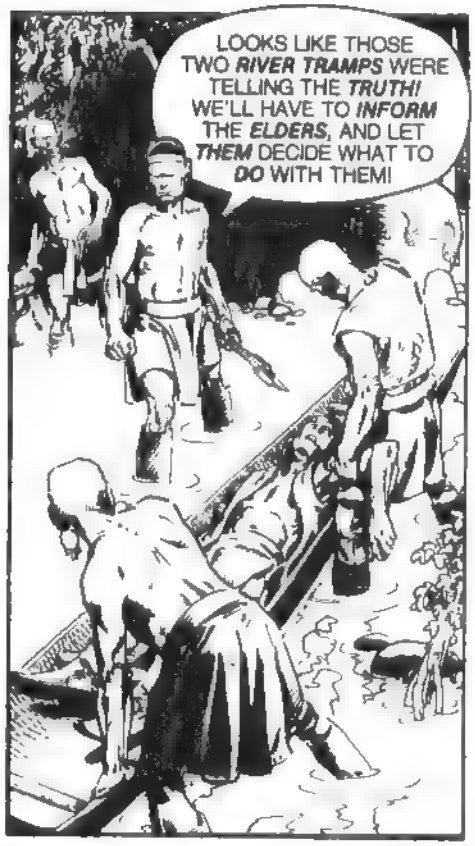
SEND SOMEONE UP THE RIVER...FIND THE BODIES OF YOUR SLAIN COMRADES...AND YOU'LL SEE THAT WE'RE TELLING THE TRUTH! YOU LL SEE THAT IT WAS THE AMAZONS WHO KILLED YOUR FRIENDS!

THE MAN HAS A POINT! BEFORE WE TAKE THEIR LIVES, WE SHOULD GIVE THEM THE CHANCE TO PROVE THEIR INNOCENCE!

AND SO...A HANDFUL OF VILLAGERS WERE DISPATCHED, UP RIVER...TO TRY TO RECOVER THE REMAINS OF THE CANOE'S FORMER OWNERS!
I WISH THESE MORONS WOULD HURRY UP AND FIND THOSE MISERABLE BODIES! ONE WRONG MOVE AND IT'LL BE OUR LAST!

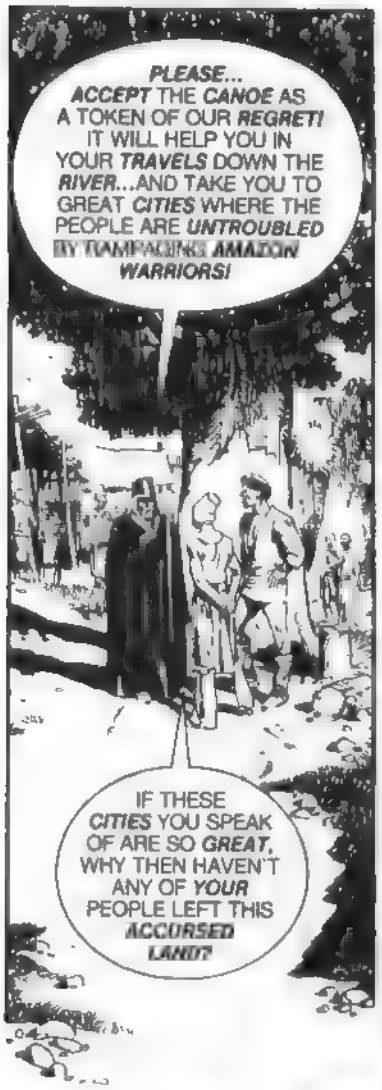
THE 'MORONS' IN QUESTION, MEANWHILE, SEARCHED THE HOLLOWS, THE BANKS, THE ROCKY AND TREE-LINED RIVER'S EDGE... ANYPLACE THE CURRENT MIGHT HAVE LODGED A FLOATING HUMAN BODY!

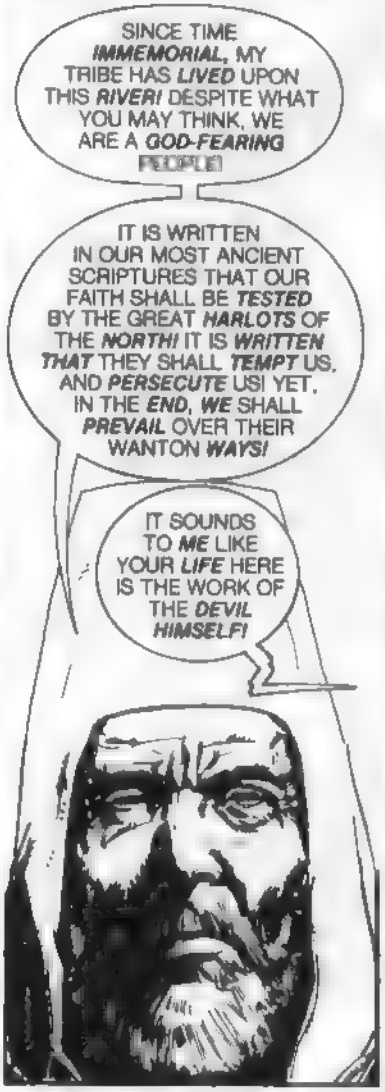
OVER HERE! I THINK I'VE FOUND SOMETHING!
IT'S EDAMM! HIS BODY–! IT... IT'S RIDDLED WITH ARROWS!

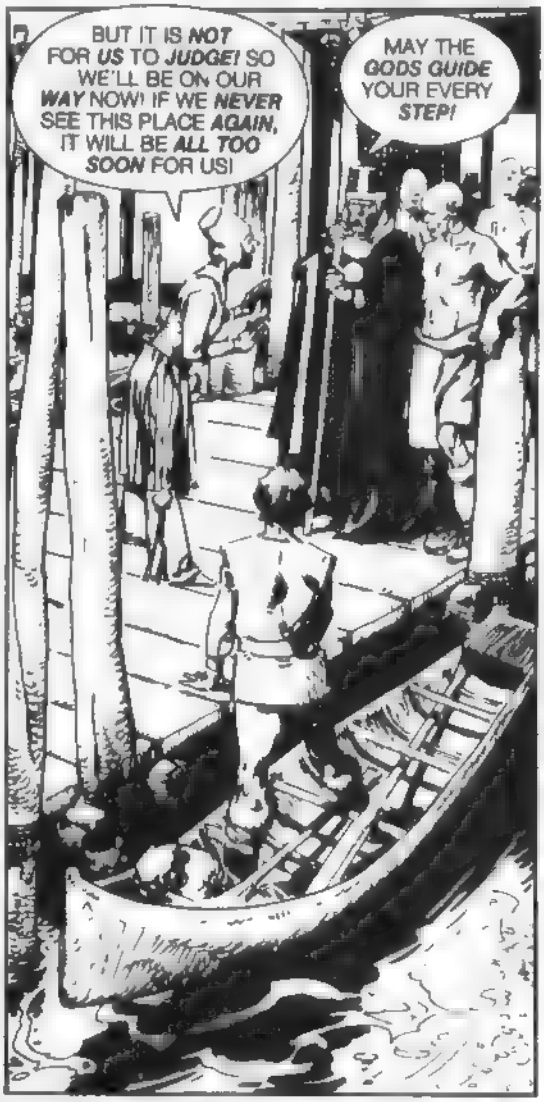

LOOKS LIKE THOSE TWO RIVER TRAMPS WERE TELLING THE TRUTH! WE'LL HAVE TO INFORM THE ELDERS, AND LET THEM DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THEM!

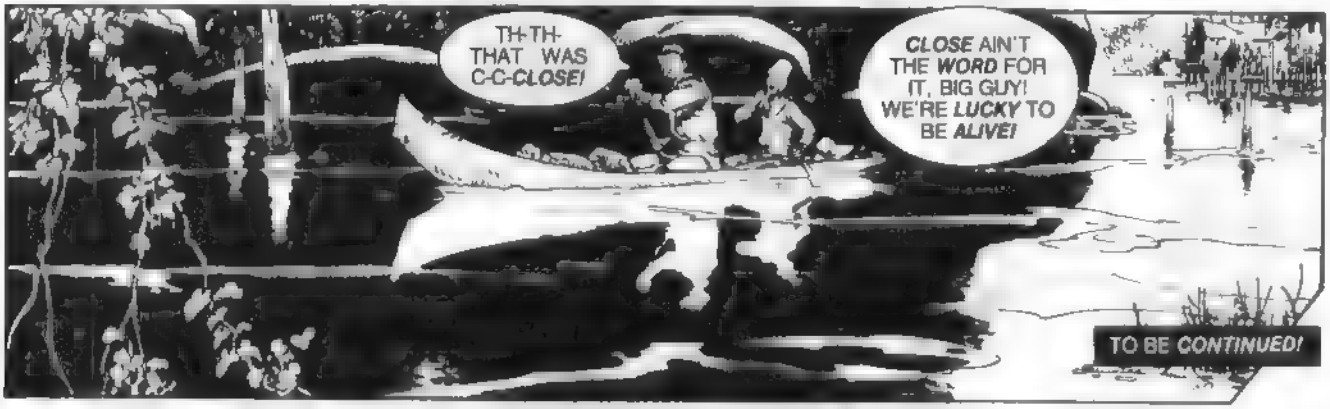
NO WORDS CAN EXPRESS OUR REGRET FOR THIS MOST UNFORGIVABLE ERROR! PLEASE ACCEPT OUR SINCEREST APOLOGIES!
SINCEREST APOLOGIES?! IS THAT THE BEST YOU CAN DO? WHEN I THINK HOW CLOSE WE WERE TO DANGLING FROM THE END OF A ROPE...ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR PARANOIA–!

PLEASE! IT WAS A MISTAKE! THERE HAS BEEN NO PERMANENT HARM DONE! WE WE ARE NOT EVIL MEN!
NO. YOU'RE NOT EVIL! YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE TOO QUICK TO JUDGE OTHERS!
BUT ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'LL GO TOO FAR. .AND ALL THE APOLOGIES IN THE WORLD WON'T DO YOU A DAMN BIT OF GOOD!


PLEASE... ACCEPT THE CANOE AS A TOKEN OF OUR REGRET! IT WILL HELP YOU IN YOUR TRAVELS DOWN THE RIVER...AND TAKE YOU TO GREAT CITIES WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE UNTROUBLED BY RAMPAGING AMAZON WARRIORS!
IF THESE CITIES YOU SPEAK OF ARE SO GREAT, WHY THEN HAVEN'T ANY OF YOUR PEOPLE LEFT THIS ACCURSED LAND?


SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, MY TRIBE HAS LIVED UPON THIS RIVER! DESPITE WHAT YOU MAY THINK, WE ARE A GOD-FEARING PEOPLE!
IT IS WRITTEN IN OUR MOST ANCIENT SCRIPTURES THAT OUR FAITH SHALL BE TESTED BY THE GREAT HARLOTS OF THE NORTH! IT IS WRITTEN THAT THEY SHALL TEMPT US, AND PERSECUTE US! YET, IN THE END, WE SHALL PREVAIL OVER THEIR WANTON WAYS!
IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOUR LIFE HERE IS THE WORK OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF!


BUT IT IS NOT FOR US TO JUDGE! SO WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY NOW! IF WE NEVER SEE THIS PLACE AGAIN, IT WILL BE ALL TOO SOON FOR US!
MAY THE GODS GUIDE YOUR EVERY STEP!


TH-TH- THAT WAS C-C-CLOSE!
CLOSE AIN'T THE WORD FOR IT, BIG GUY! WE'RE LUCKY TO BE ALIVE!
TO BE CONTINUED!

STAR WARS

THE MOST EXCITING NEW MODELS AVAILABLE!

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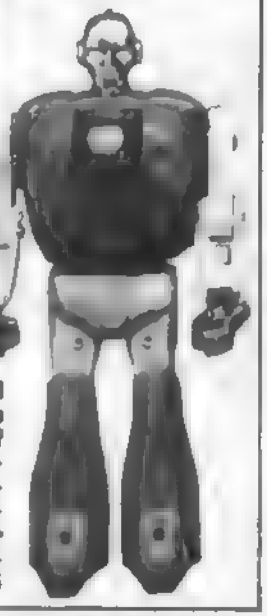

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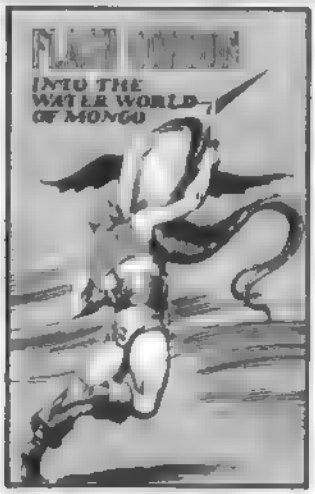

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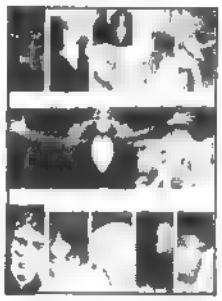

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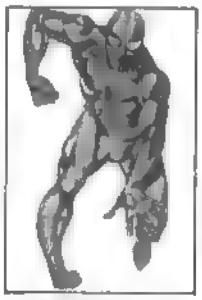

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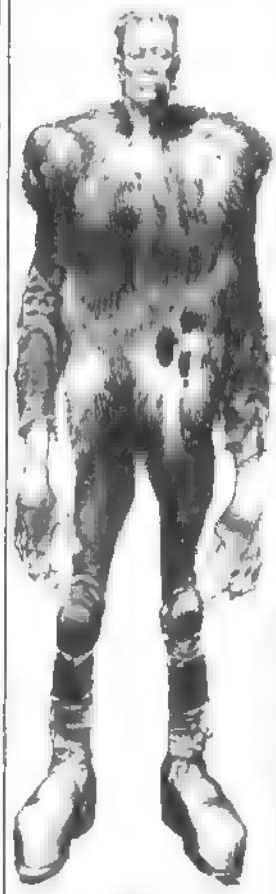
DRAWN BY JACK DAVIS



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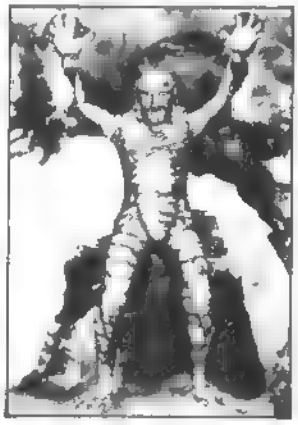

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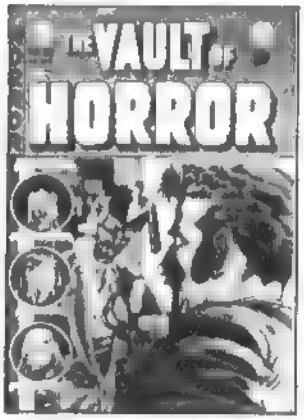

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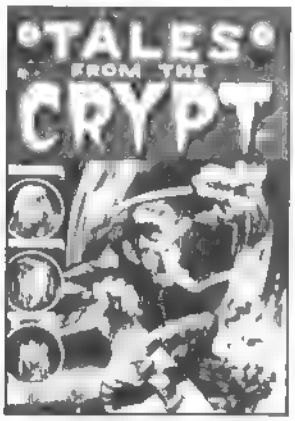

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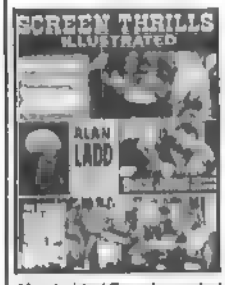

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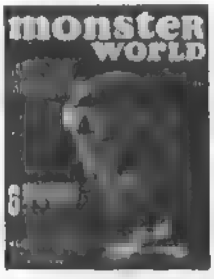

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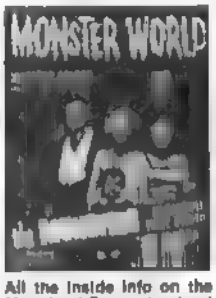

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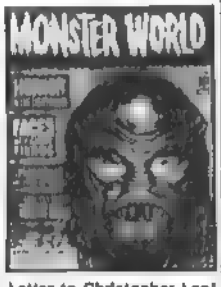

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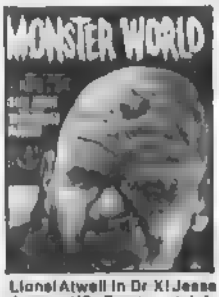

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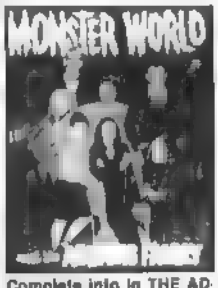

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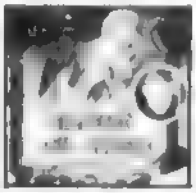

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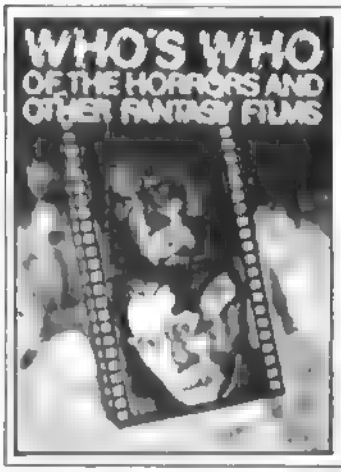

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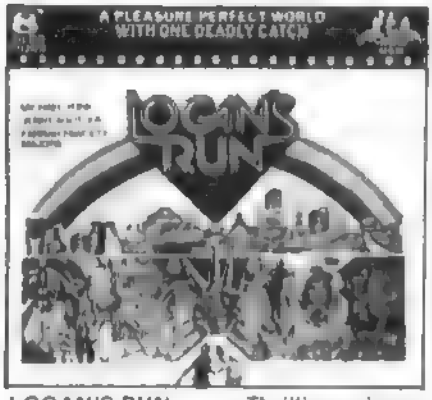

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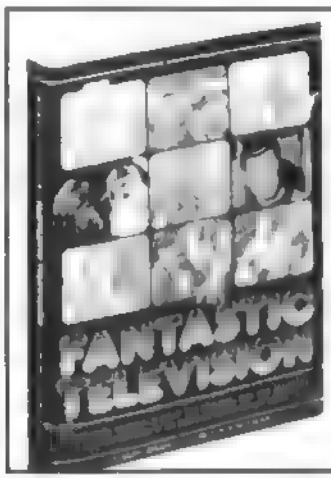

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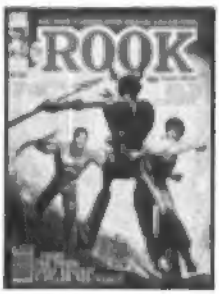

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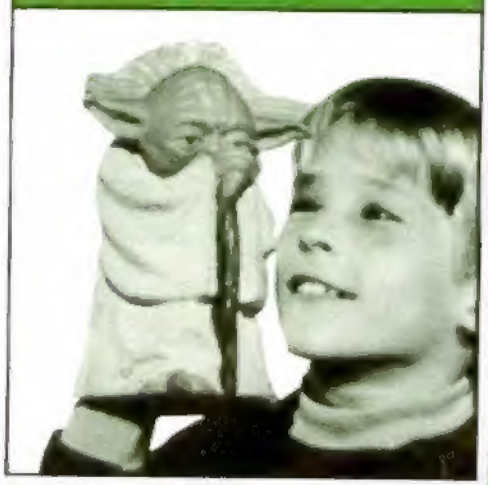

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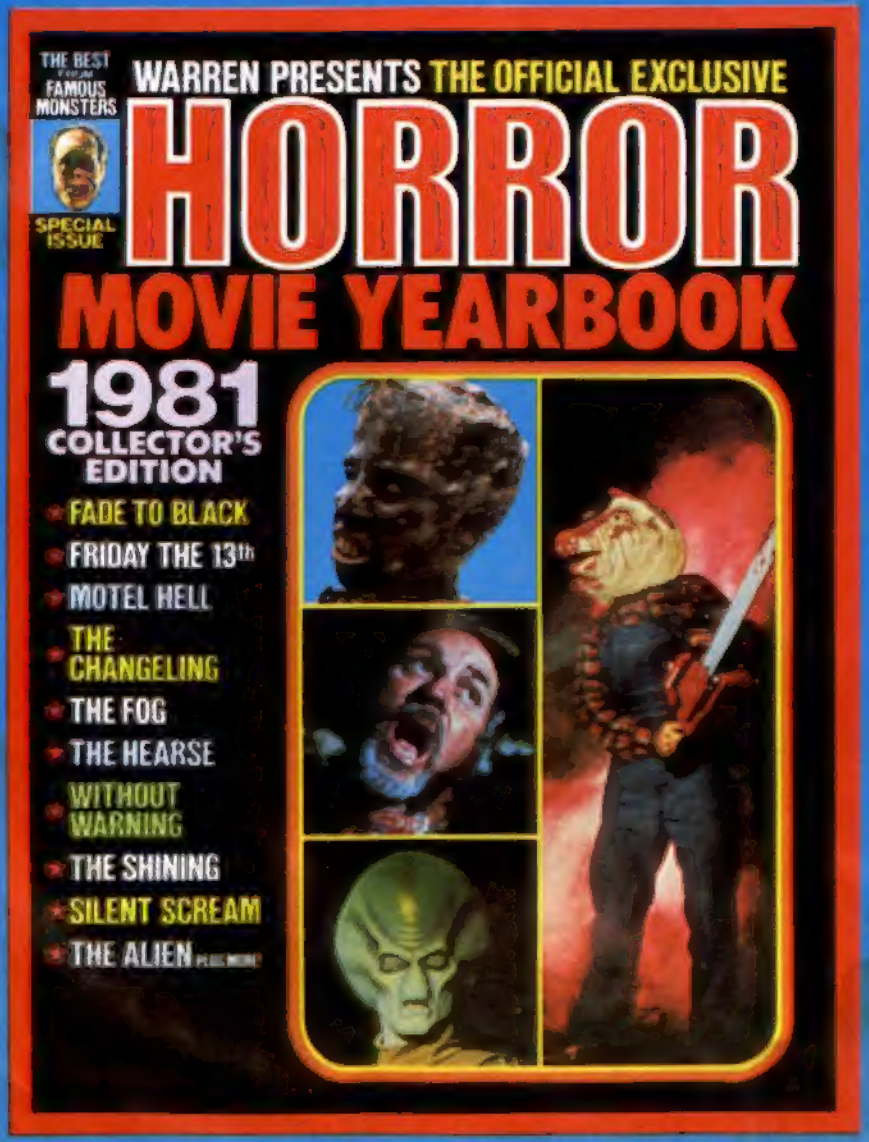

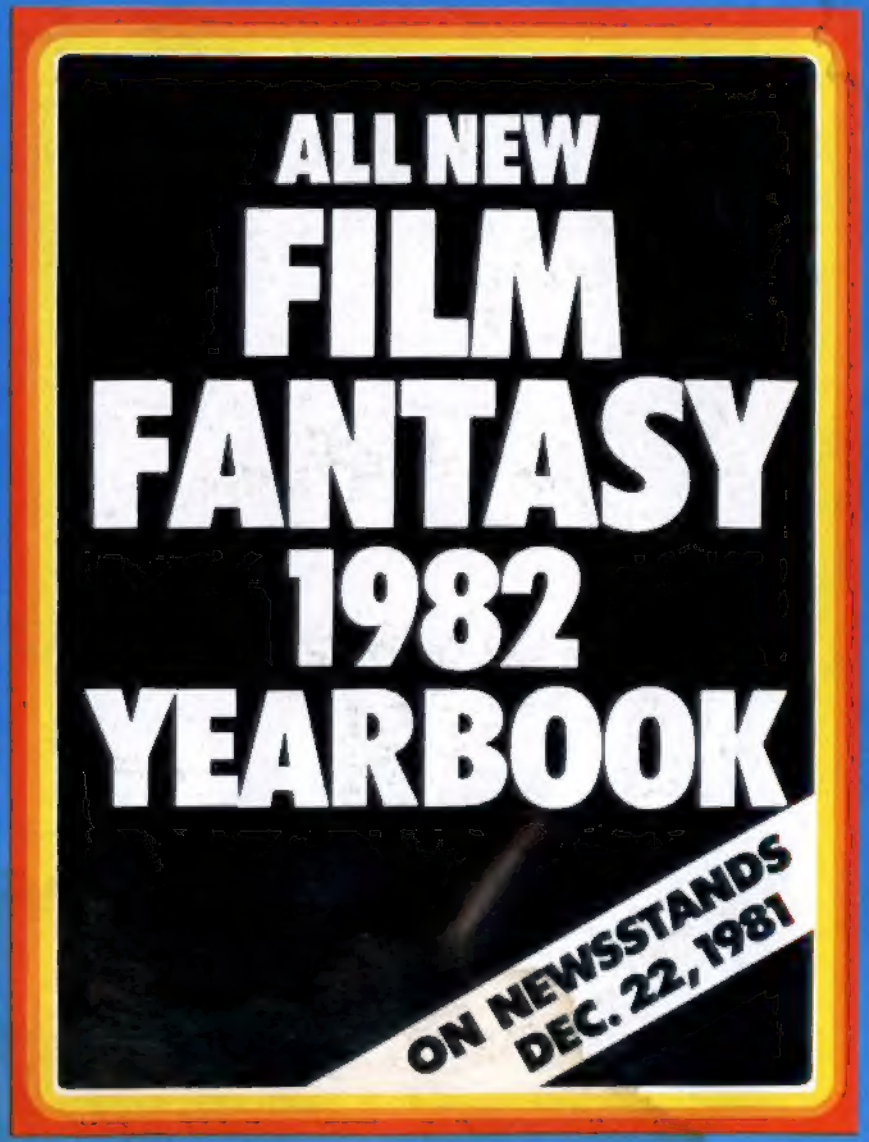

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